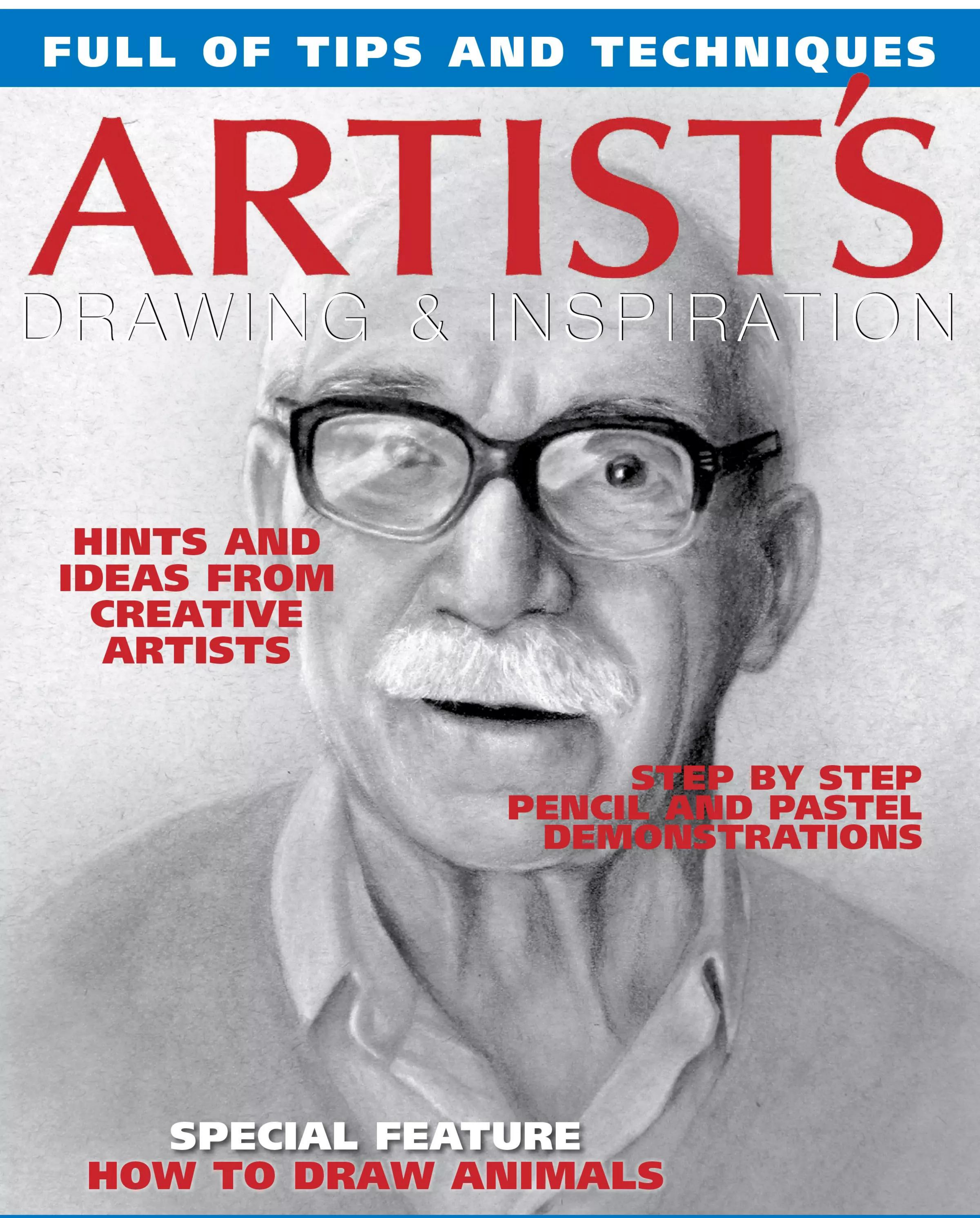
FULL OF TIPS AND TECHNIQUES

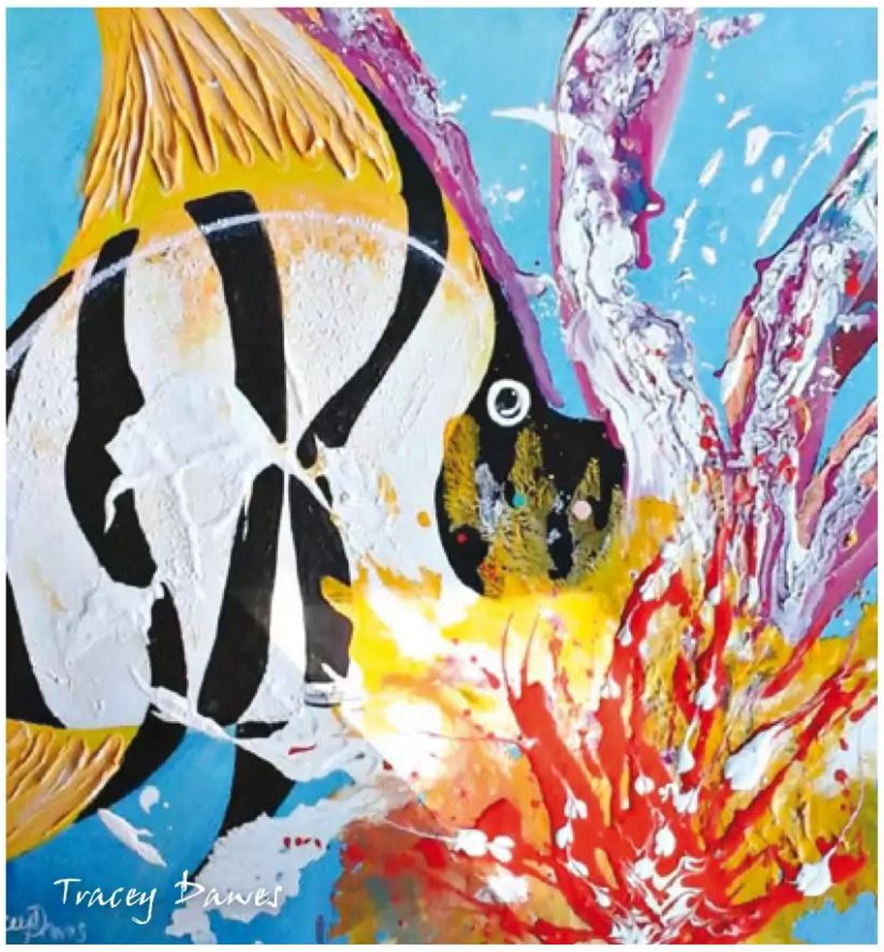
ARTIST'S DRAWING & INSPIRATION



HINTS AND IDEAS FROM CREATIVE ARTISTS

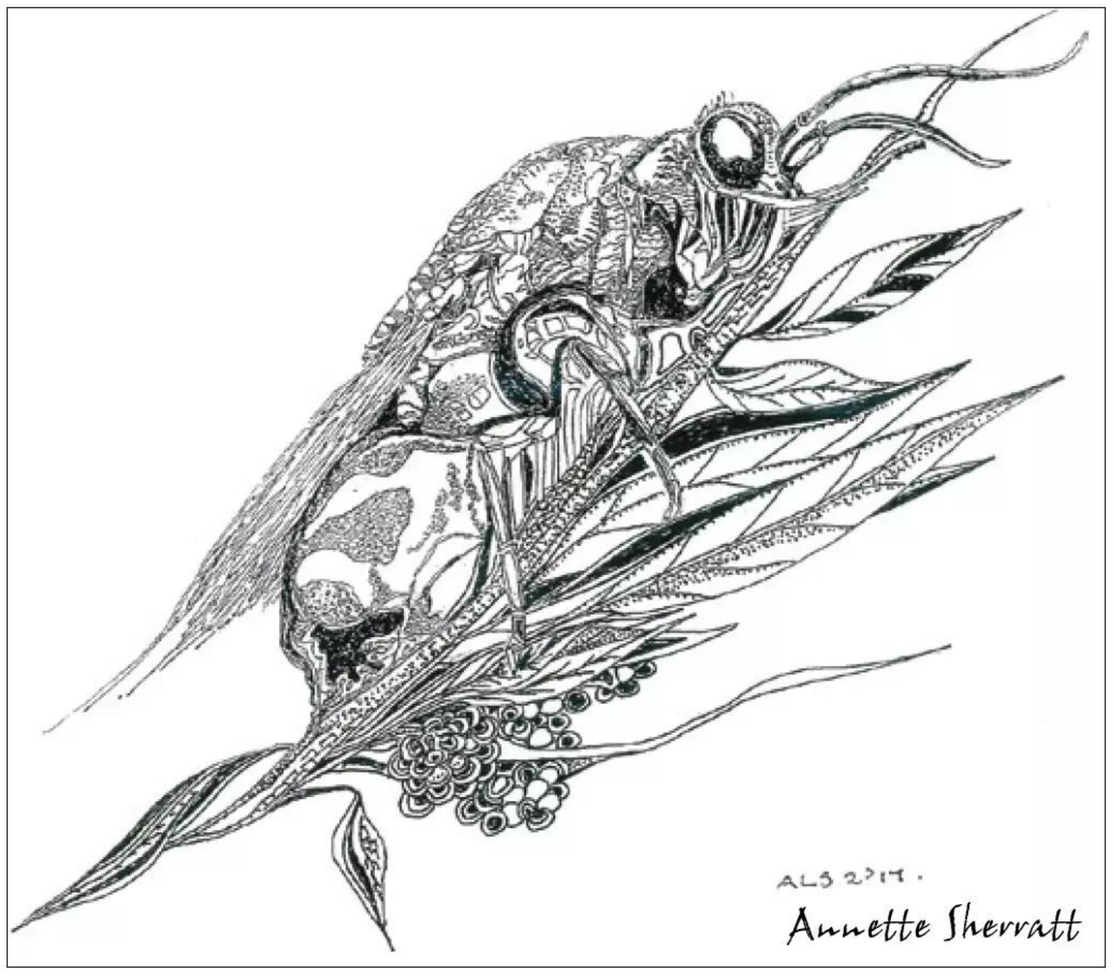
STEP BY STEP PENCIL AND PASTEL DEMONSTRATIONS

SPECIAL FEATURE
HOW TO DRAW ANIMALS



Hi,
My name is Tracey Dawes and I live near Mackay and the Whitsundays in Queensland.
I started painting with folk art classes in Sydney in the 90's, and have developed ever since. Art was only a hobby until I moved to Queensland due to my husband's job 4 years ago. I couldn't find a 'proper' job myself, so decided to have a go at turning art into a career, holding my first exhibition at the ripe old age of 46!
I love acrylics, but have recently discovered watercolour and pastels - why limit yourself to one media?

These feature pages are reserved for displaying the work of emerging and developing Australian artists; as well as other unknowns whose efforts may provide interest for our readers.



I'm sending a copy of Annette Sherratt's work – a 'Creative Artist' reader from NZ. Annette is very taken with the pen stipple style and has incorporated it into her artwork and been practising with my photography from the 'Shooting For Art' articles, she has sent me some copies for appraisal. Her work has a lovely contemporary application which is well suited for textile designs of which she likes to produce on T-shirts.

Kind Regards
Margaret Hodgson OAM

Dear Woodlands Gallery,
My very first childhood memories were of me drawing horses for my Nana. She would stick them all over her kitchen and never took one down. Besides being an Artist, I am a Nurse in which I deal with human emotion on a daily basis. This in itself can be emotionally taxing. My art is mood orientated and designed to focus on the brighter side of life and invoke feelings of joy from those who look upon it.
I don't set out to produce art about one subject or another. There is no structured thought process, it just seems to evolve. My love for animals provides me with day to day inspiration to create and capture moments I translate into my art.

Kind Regards,
Tracy Mitchell

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Margaret Ann Wilson

Eye of Observation

By Margaret Ann Wilson

Draw, draw, and draw some more; develop your artist's eye of observation. Sterling advice from a lady who believes that seeing shapes in paintings requires a truly 'arty' eye.

Melbourne in Victoria was my birthplace. I have spent 34 years in Tasmania, however – where I did most of my painting.

I moved to Ultima in Victoria (in the Mallee) one year ago, after my husband died. The town is located 30 kilometres from Swan Hill with a population of 61. I work every day painting, studying or reading about art in my studio at my home.

Before I became ill, I lived in Tasmania at Murdunna and I worked at the Port Arthur Historic Site for many years. After the massacre of 28 April 1996, I became very ill with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder which is a debilitating mental illness. I had a mental breakdown. I was very sick for years. Because this illness is incurable, I have to live with it every day. Management of the sickness and medication is the only way to have any control over my life.

My painting has become most important to me, and I am truly fortunate to have such an outlet. I study art and I want to learn and develop my art to become more proficient; and more able to help others to enjoy the great pleasure that painting can give them.

I have not had formal art training other than Year 11 and 12 Art as a mature age student – but I have painted from my earliest memory, on everything and anything I could get my

hands on. I have worked with a few rather well known artists in Tasmania.

I am passionate about colour and its behaviour when mixed; also the effects made possible by experimenting with colours, particularly the colours of the Australian Outback, the bush and farming … in every painting I want to venture in and wonder what is going on. Hopefully viewers of my work want to join me and take adventures to see over many horizons.

I read and study much about art. I experiment and take thousands and thousands of photographs. I study the colours of the sky, land, creatures, trees, dirt, rocks, undergrowth; their structure and shapes … then I create artistic works using all of the above.

I began painting as a child. As an adult, I paint almost every day. I paint for myself … for my head and my heart. If someone wants to buy any of my paintings, I will discuss that with them. My intention is to share my skills and encourage others; learn from others and develop further my passion to tell Australia's story in drawing and colour.

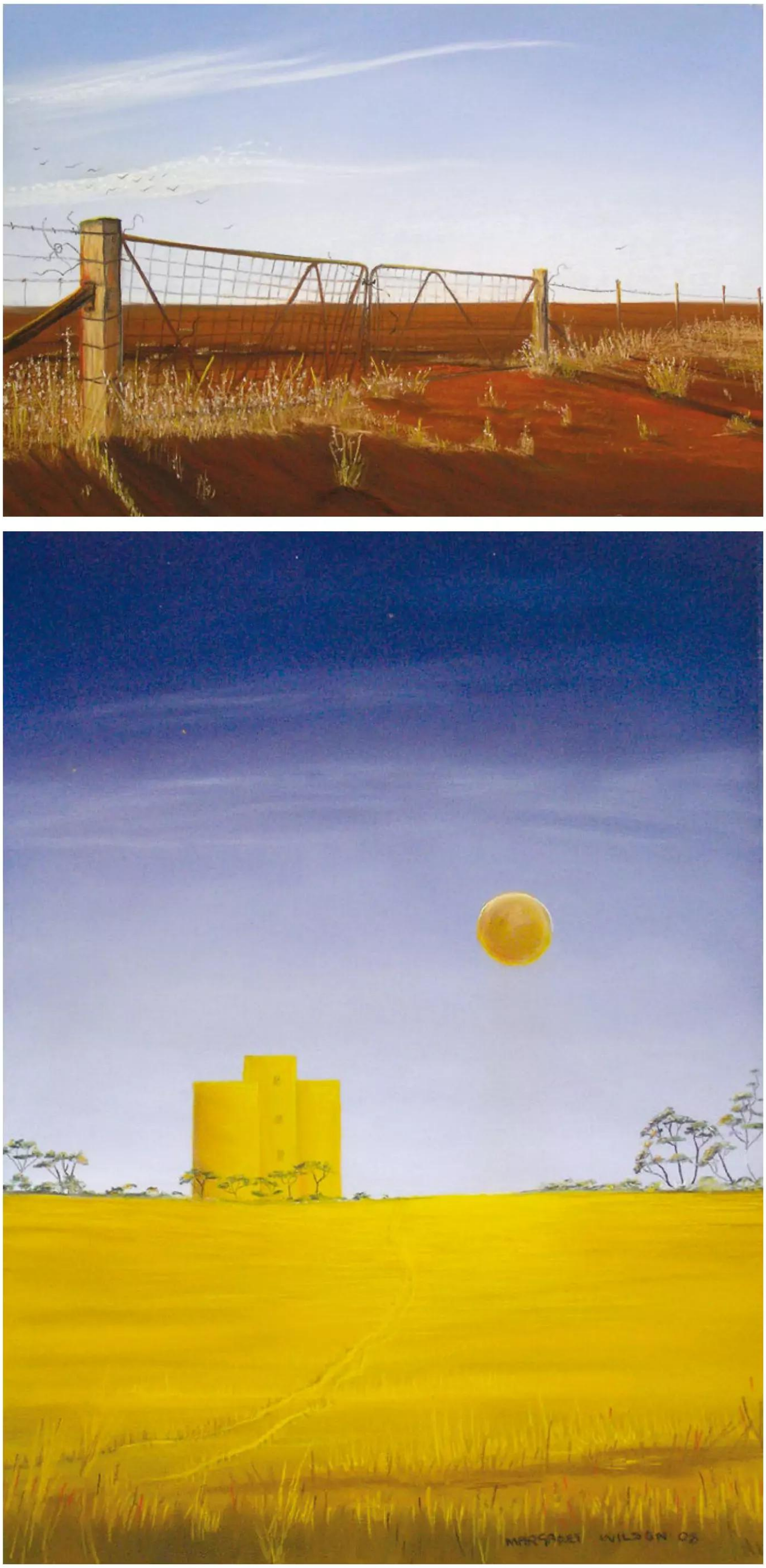
My motto is: Never give up, never give in, just keep painting. Painting gives me confidence. I love to meet other artists, and I particularly like to talk about art.

In the past I have used oils and acrylics – but I now use pastels as they lend themselves to the harshness and softness of the Australian bush. They are able to be mixed on site. They are easy to transport and can be very fast to use. A really versatile medium.

Australia's bush, animals, desert, Outback, trees, plants, sunsets, skies … all tell the story of our country and the people of the present and past who made this nation what it is … these are the subjects that motivate me. I need to express them in drawings and colour. Australia in all its glory and all its colour constantly inspires me.

I am a member of Mallee Artists Swan Hill (MASH) which is very active in the community. I have been treasurer of the Tasmania Art Exhibition and involved in many exhibitions and groups; but now I paint for me.

I take care of orphaned animals, and I paint them all. Possums, wallabies, wombats … I have one such painting with me here at home and I have been offered a great deal of money for it, but it will stay with me. I am also proud of 'The



Tiger's Farewell' which was acquired by the Clarence Council at the City of Clarence Aquisitive Exhibition. Recently I painted a mural for our local primary school, which was lots of fun.

There have been many artistic disasters for me. I believe that if you have never made a mistake, you have never made anything. Sometimes I envisage just what I want my painting to look like finished – but I can work on it until the cows come home and it just never happens. Once I painted a farm scene with a gate as the main focus and I was thrilled with it. Then, from my studio, I spotted two magpies interacting with each other. 'Wow'! I thought. 'I will put them in my painting'! So full of myself and a little cocky, I put them on my farm gate. It turned out dreadful. If I had gone back to my sketch and placed them in and taken my time, it would have worked very well. Lesson learned.

One good thing about Colourfix paper is that you can brush off the pastel almost to the original colour and, if need be, apply a coat of Art Spectrum Colourfix Primer – this allows you to use the paper again.

Not drawing or sketching my subject first – to see just what I want to leave and what I do not need – is a big mistake. I am not much good at painting with people around; although I do give demonstrations.

I keep lots of my paintings at home in my studio. Many are acquired by people who visit my studio.

Artists I admire include all the Masters of the Heidelberg School; Tom Roberts; Arthur Streeton; Charles Conder; Frederick McCubbin; David Davies; Walter Withers; and the Impressionists. I adore William Dobell's people, too. Many of our own country's famous artists told Australia's story very well … and now it is our turn.

I have given classes in drawing and painting in Tasmanian primary schools, and I have conducted private classes at my home. I am very happy to pass on my experience. I hope to open my studio to other artists to come and paint and learn.

I take numerous photographs, and I sketch and draw a lot. With every painting, my thoughts are: 'Why do I want to paint this'? I look for the story it is telling me. 'What do I want to paint and leave in; and what do I want to leave out'? I like to eliminate all the unnecessary elements, then present the painting to tell the full story. I consider whether I need lots of sky, or a little sky; a dramatic sky, or a soft or pastel sky … keeping in mind that sky is an atmosphere and it absorbs all shades of colour (it is not blue and flat). I work on my skies, and so on. What, why and how. I never give in and never give up. I always put my paintings somewhere I can see them during the non-painting times, and make adjustments and mental notes accordingly. I can see paintings everywhere.

If I was developing my art now, I would draw, draw, and draw some more. Everything around me. I encourage others to keep a small pad and pencil and draw … working on perspective, shading, shadows, lighting and shapes; and 'develop your artist's eye of observation'. Observe light on dark and dark on light. You may walk past a gate and see that the posts holding the gate are old wood, slightly burnt on one side, with fine grass standing out on the black background; the nails and twisted wire; the fact that the gate has not been used for some time; the wires broken; a rusted chain draped around a couple of times and almost touching the ground; a hinge lifting away from the post … and other things that make that gate unique. Another person sees only a gate.

Seeing shapes in paintings takes a real 'arty' eye. All paintings have shapes. And we need to study colours from Nature because Nature has no rules – all colours match and get on with each other.

My ultimate goal as an artist is to paint paintings that depict our land, and to encourage others to notice our environment and grow a desire to visit the world around us. Maybe then all people will respect and protect this beautiful Australia.

Pastels

Once We Were Important

By Margaret Ann Wilson

A simplified and well named painting tells a powerful and interesting story. This clever pastel artist is delighted to share her techniques for the benefit of others.

MATERIALS

- Colourfix paper.
- Selected artists' pastels.

While driving down a bush lane one afternoon, I noticed an abandoned property. It seemed so sad to see the old telegraph pole still standing – even though it had not been in use for many, many years. The post and letterbox were from another time, and the fences and wire were all put there by folk hoping for a future in farming. I felt I needed to tell this story.

Before I begin a painting, I ask myself: 'What attracted me to this subject and what story is it telling me'? I need to determine what to leave in and what to take out. Once I have decided how I will paint the subject, I start making many sketches and doing lots of pondering. I finally come to a conclusion about how to tell the story.

Give this technique a go … see what your final sketch will be. It is a fun way to start a painting. As you are working and thinking, think about the colours, shapes, distance, and so on.

I am one artist who never has 'white canvas syndrome'! By the time I am ready to begin painting, I am so excited I cannot wait to get my hands covered in pastel.

Starting a painting, I choose the colours for the sky. In this painting, four colours: White, mauve, dark blue and light blue. All colours start from the top. I cover the paper with white from top to bottom; dark blue one-third of the way from the top; and light blue two-thirds down. Don't be shy to press pastels firmly. Then, working across the paper, start blending from the top down. Blending means to firmly press your fingers onto the pastel and, in small circular movements, work across the paper so your colours are mixed together.

I used mauve last over the bottom of the painting. I take a long time to blend my skies; I believe the sky is a very important part of the work so I take time and blend slowly and

MASTER HINTS AND TIPS

- Pastel dust always seems to be mentioned when I give demonstrations. My solution is to always start with a dust-free area and table; and clean up after every painting. 'Wet Ones' or baby wipes are just the thing for this (and also for cleaning your hands). They don't wet your fingers, so you don't have to wait before using or blending your pastels; and they don't dry out your hands. Some things you may notice are that your fingertips will become sore, and because you have to wash your hands so often they can become very dry … both problems can put a stop to your masterpieces.
- Clean your hands between each colour. It is demoralising to have a wonderful sky and, after using red pastel in the foreground, to touch up your sky with a red finger! Yes … I have actually done this.
- I have seen many ways to clean pastels, but I have found that wiping them is the quickest way.
- Have fun painting – especially with pastels.
- All of my paintings have been produced from photographs I have taken, and my own sketches.

take stops to look at the results. It is possible to put more colour on where I feel more depth is needed.

For an exercise, try using just one shade of blue, and white. Blend them. See and feel the difference. Spending time to blend your pastels will give that 'totally covered' look; and using many colours gives colour intensity and depth. Give it a try.

Wispy clouds are added by using mauve and white quite firmly across the bottom of the painting, and then sweeping the colours upwards very softly with your fingers – gradually developing soft wisps of colour.

The white pastel will not mix very much with the sky; it will stay on the top. Only if you actually blend the colours will they totally be mixed together – so lightly, lightly is the best approach.

The clouds are smudged in with white pastels, starting with very small clouds close to the horizon and getting further apart and bigger closer to the top of the painting. The smaller the clouds on the horizon, the further away they will appear. Adding clouds in this way takes a while, but it is worth it. It is worthwhile to take lots of photographs of clouds and study their shapes, their colours, and the weather they produce.

The background is loosely blended cool grey browns and yellows. I then free-draw my pole post and letterbox in, using white pastel – keeping in mind that I have sketched the painting already on the same size paper. I choose my colours for the pole and post and begin to block them in. I use pastels for this; and for sharper lines I use pastel pencils.

It is important to keep pastel pencils sharp. I use a blade because I experience too much wastage with pencil sharpeners.

I work over the painting until all my details are in place. I work carefully from here on, because dots and dashes can turn a painting into a chocolate box painting very quickly.

A simplified and well named painting tells a powerful and interesting story.

Finally, I take an overall look. And last of all, I add the birds.

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Tracey Choyce

Passion for Portraits

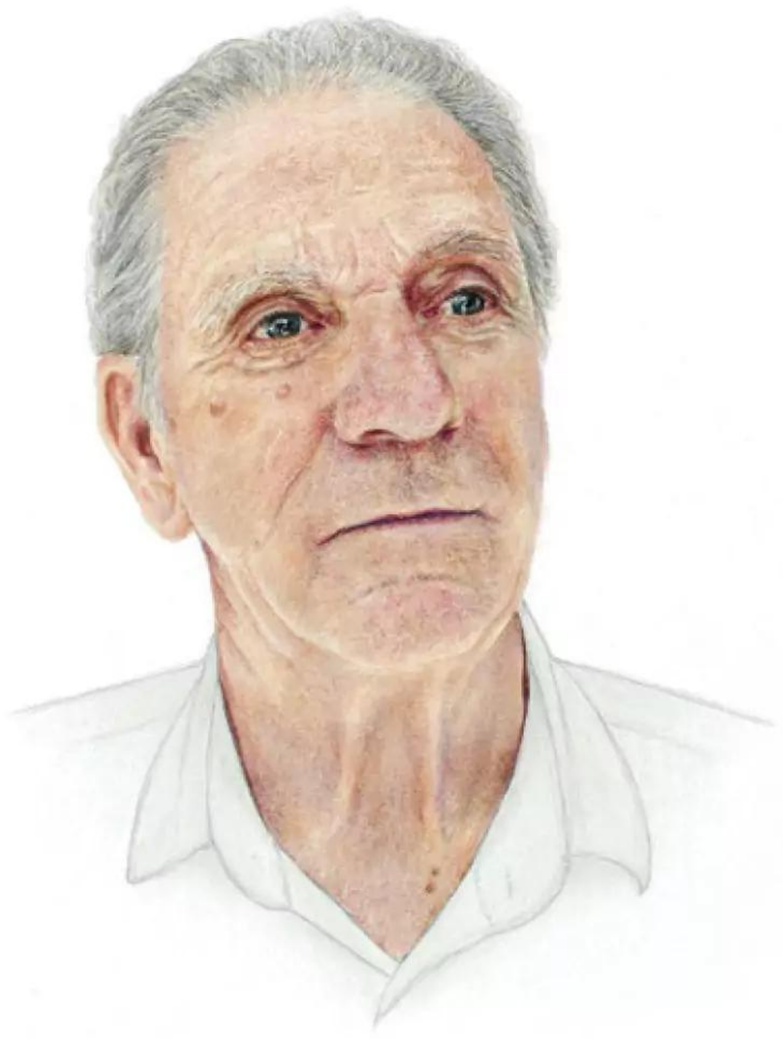
Tracey Choyce is an inquisitive artist who goes beyond simply sketching a subject, instead forming a personal connection that takes her art to the next level.

Tracey was born in Melbourne but relocated to Brisbane as a child in the late 1980s. Her fondest memories from this time are the countless hours spent in the family art room, drawing with her brother. Like most siblings, Tracey recalls how they were very competitive and would hold drawing competitions for their parents to judge. Her parents encouraged them to draw, with her dad's consistent sketching of people and architecture a source of inspiration. Her mum had spent time travelling in Italy and would often talk about her love for the art and architecture of Florence and Rome. Her mum was also a life drawing model at the local art school, although she never told Tracey's grandparents about this endeavour.

"When I was about ten years old she gave me the book 'The Story of Art' by E H Gombrich. I was fascinated by the beauty, mystery and realism of artists like Rembrandt, Vermeer, Botticelli and da Vinci, and I was convinced I wanted to be an artist when I grew up."

Tracey also admires the work of contemporary artists including David Kassan, Steve Caldwell, Julian Meagher, Mary Jane Ansell and Carla Fletcher.

After leaving school, Tracey studied a Diploma of Visual Arts while she worked for a children's fashion designer in Brisbane. In 2006, she completed a Bachelor of Fine Art at Queensland College of Art, majoring in Digital Media. Tracey put her drawing on hold for a few years while she pursued a career in digital media. It wasn't until 2012 that she picked up the pencils again, after seeing some



beautiful portraits by a local artist that had been drawn in Prismacolor pencils.

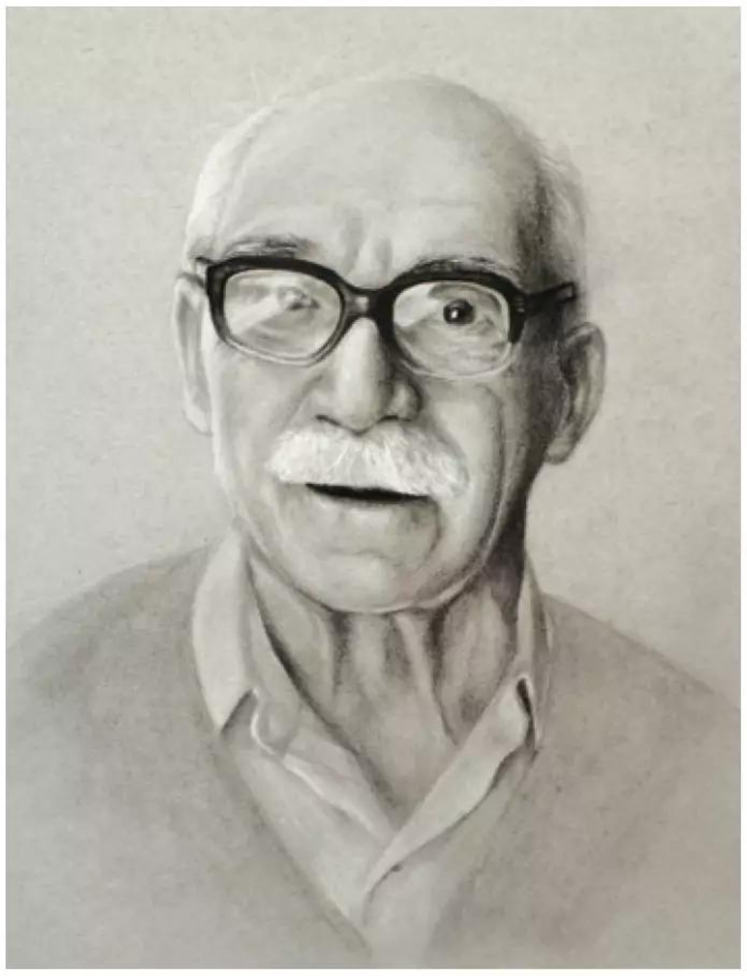
"I bought myself a set to experiment with and instantly rediscovered my love of portrait drawing. It took me a while to learn how to use the Prismacolors to their best advantage; being a wax-based pencil they are not very forgiving."

Like all artists, after a little trial and error Tracey worked out how to best blend and burnish and which paper suited her style. She describes still discovering new techniques and ways of working, recently finding a love for the blend effects on wood panel. She also works with charcoal pencils and has started incorporating pastel into some of her portraits.

"Ever since I started drawing I've always had a fascination with portraits. Any chance I could I was sketching a face, either from my imagination or of anyone who was willing to sit for me."

For Tracey, it's always been so much about the process of drawing, about getting to know the person behind the face and of observing the intricacies of their features in order to depict something more below the surface.

"The drawings I am the most satisfied with are those where I've had the chance to connect with the subject on a personal level; this connection brings another dimension that translates into the artwork beyond just a representation of the subject on paper."



In 2014, Tracey made the decision to leave her job of 13 years and take up part time work so she would have more time to focus on her art. She travelled to Italy and finally got to see the works of artists she had studied and long admired. She now works on portrait commissions (people and pets), and has been a finalist in national art prizes including the Hurford Hardwood Portrait Prize, the Rick Amor Drawing Prize and the Marie Ellis Prize for Drawing.

"I feel the most content when I'm in my studio working on a portrait and watching it evolve. There's such a therapeutic feeling that comes from sketching that allows all stress and outside influences to dissolve as you immerse yourself into the artwork."

FINALIST

- Cliftons Art Prize 2016, Cliftons Brisbane
- Rick Amor Drawing Prize 2016, Art Gallery of Ballarat
- Moreton Bay Region Art Awards 2016, Pine Rivers Art Gallery
- Rotary Art Spectacular 2016, Central Plaza 1 Brisbane
- Royal Queensland Show 2015, Brisbane Royal Exhibition Building
- Hurford Hardwood Portrait Prize 2015, Lismore Regional Gallery
- Cliftons Art Prize 2015, Cliftons Brisbane
- Brisbane Art Prize 2015, Lightspace Brisbane
- Marie Ellis OAM Prize for Drawing 2015, Jugglers Art Space
- Lethbridge 10 000 2015, Lethbridge Gallery
- Marie Ellis OAM Prize for Drawing 2014, Jugglers Art Space

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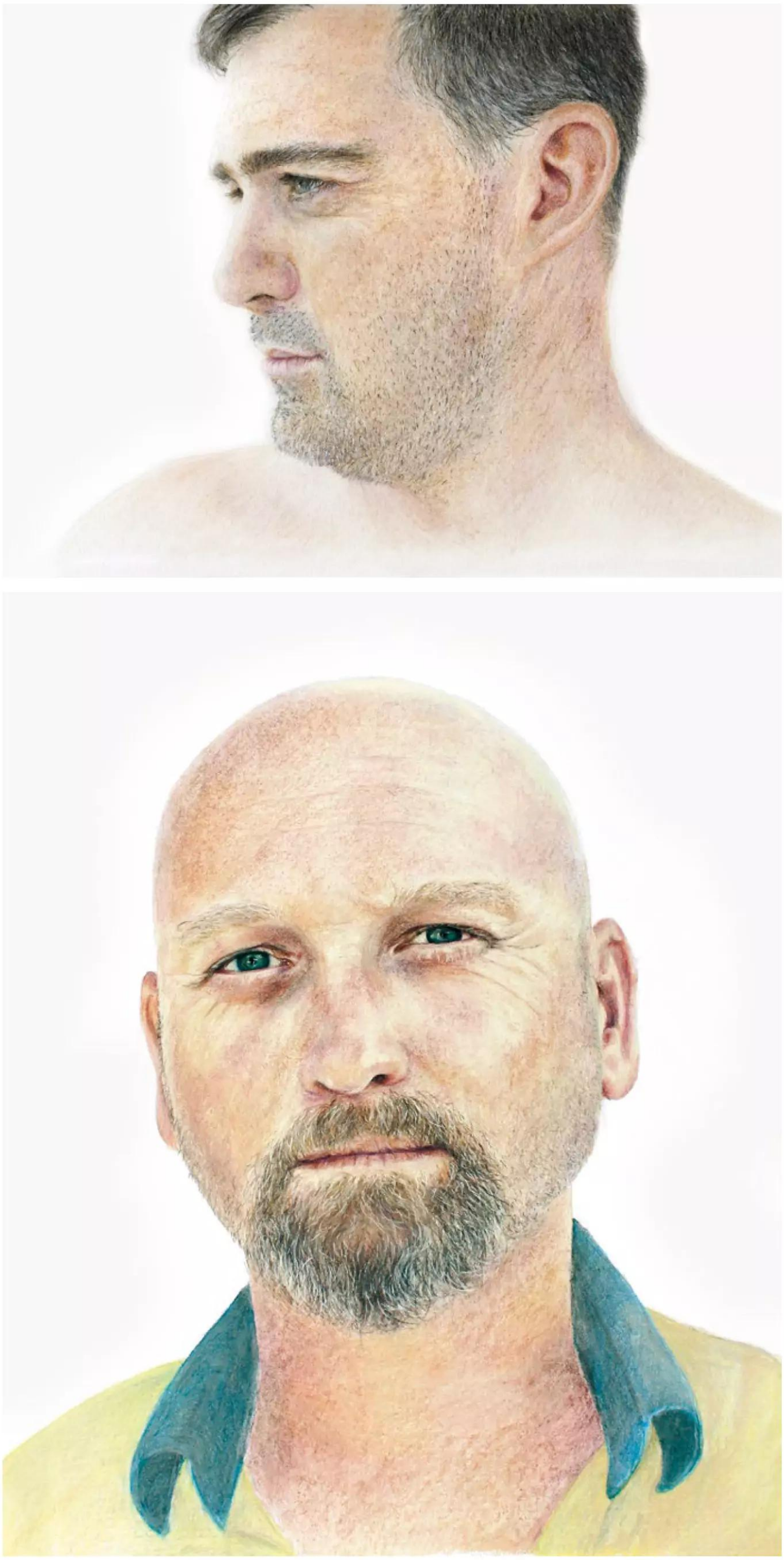
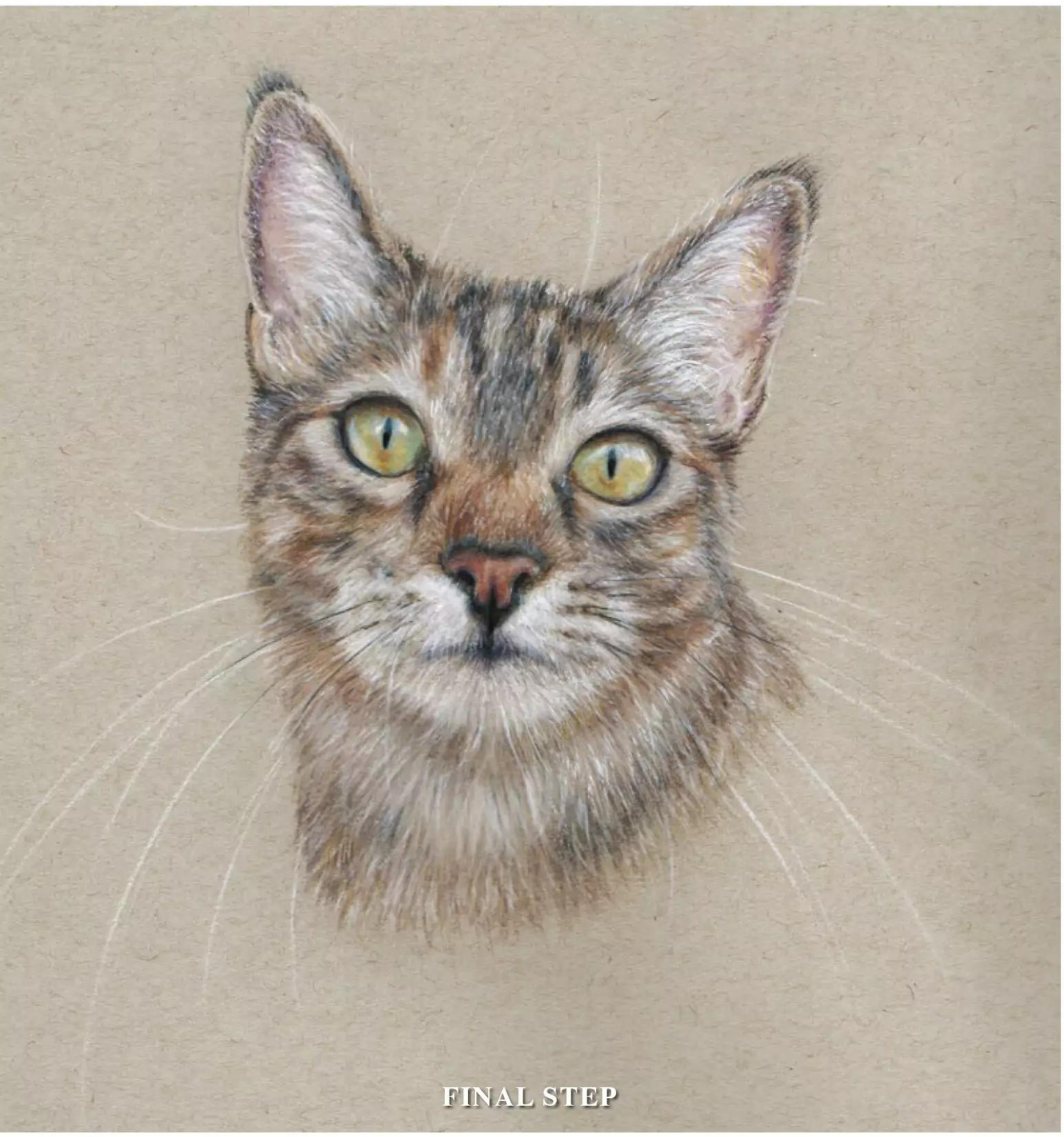


Pencils

Hear Me Purr

By Tracey Choyce

I've created this portrait using Prismacolor pencils. By using various shades of green, I've been able to create striking eyes that pop out of the portrait.



STEP ONE

Start with your reference image. For accuracy and for a perfectly proportioned drawing you can use the grid method. I overlay a grid onto my image in Photoshop and then using a ruler and a B pencil, draw up a grid with the same dimensions on my blank paper. Keep the pressure as light as possible so the lines can easily be erased later, and so as not to leave an indentation in the paper.

STEP TWO

Using the B pencil draw in the main outlines, paying close attention to your reference image. I also mark in any areas where the fur changes colour and main markings so I know where to work later. This is the framework that your drawing will build on so it's important to get these just right.

STEP THREE

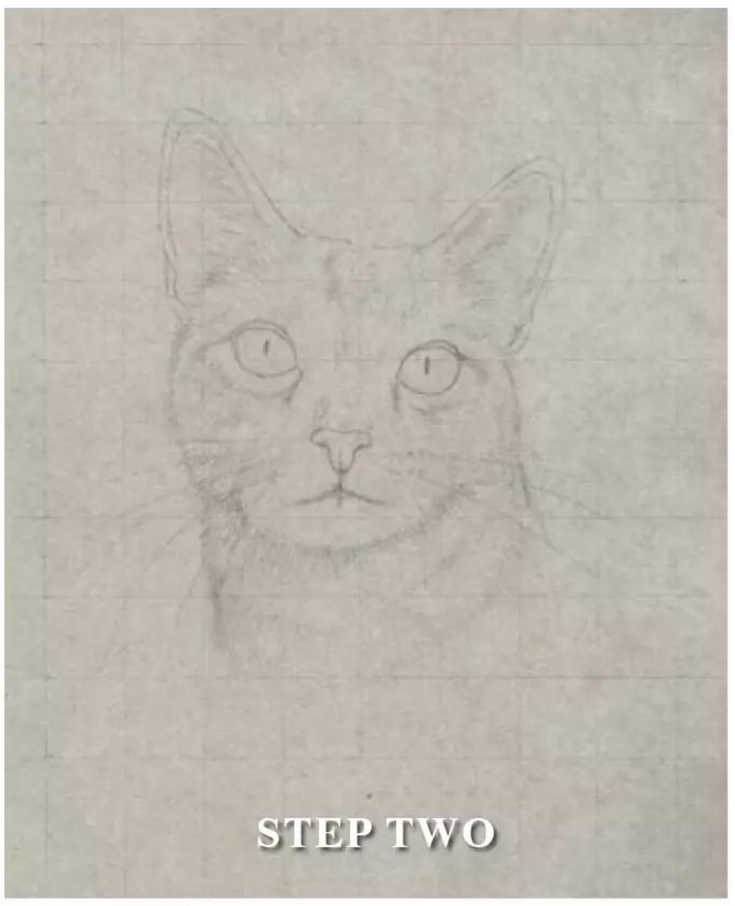
With the kneadable eraser, gently erase the pencil grid lines. Then using a colour that will blend in with the fur (I used Sandbar Brown) lightly draw over your line work, using the kneadable eraser to rub out the pencil lines as you go.

MATERIALS

- Strathmore 11”x 14” Toned Gray Paper, 118gsm
- B Graphite Pencil
- Kneadable Eraser
- Metal Pencil Sharpener
- Ruler
- Prismacolor Colourless Blender
- Winsor & Newton White Ink (alternatively you can use a white gel pen)
- Fine Paintbrush (10/0)
- Spray Fixative
- Prismacolor Premier Pencils (Fur):
  – Ginger Root
  – Sandbar Brown
  – Sienna Brown
  – Dark Brown
  – 90% French Grey
  – 90% Cool Grey
  – 50% Cool Grey
  – 30% Cool Grey
  – Black
- Prismacolor Premier Pencils (Nose):
  – Peach Beige
  – Argile Rose
  – Sheashell Pink
  – Peach
  – Sienna Brown
  – Sepia
  – 50% French Grey
  – White
- Prismacolor Premier Pencils (Eyes):
  – Jade Green
  – Celadon Green
  – Apple Green
  – Eggshell
  – Sand
  – Yellow Ocre
  – Pale Sage
  – Sienna Brown
  – 90% Cool Grey
  – White
  – Black
- Prismacolor Premier Pencils (Ears):
  – Seashell Pink
  – Peach
  – Argile Rose
  – White

STEP ONE

Now you are left with only the outline and main markings in coloured pencil, with all graphite pencil marks erased.



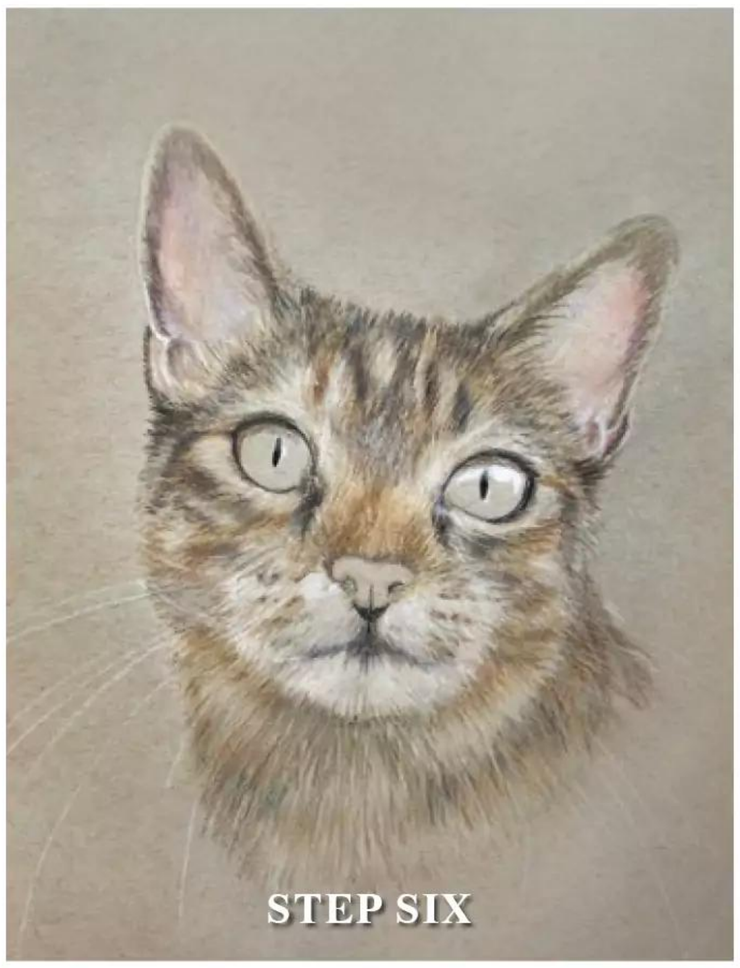
STEP TWO

STEP FOUR

Start drawing in the lighter and mid-tone colours in the fur using light pressure. Draw your lines in

STEP THREE AND FOUR

STEP FIVE


STEP SIX

STEP SEVEN

the direction of the fur growth, leaving the areas of white fur. Make sure to keep checking your reference photo. Your aim at this stage is to start building up layers of colour to get the main tones and shading correct. Take note of the length of the fur, using shorter or longer pencil strokes depending on the fur length.

STEP FIVE

Once you are happy with the layers of colour, use the colourless blending pencil to draw over (burnish) the pencil strokes of the fur. Burnishing will saturate the colours, creating a seamless blend of your pencil layers and filling the paper surface with colour to give depth and a smooth finish.

Draw lightly at first just in case you need to add more colour in - as once the pencils are fully burnished the smooth waxy finish this creates can make it harder to add more colours on top.

STEP SIX

Start adding in the fine details. Using a sharp pencil, draw in the darker areas of detail in the fur, eyes, nose and mouth with 90% Cool Grey and Black.

STEP SEVEN

Draw in the pinks of the nose and ears. I layered the colours lightly, blending with the white pencil until I was happy with the colour tones. There is a highlight across the top and down the middle of her nose, and shadows underneath. These small details will help to give it form rather than being just a flat colour.

STEP EIGHT

Colour the eyes. Blend the yellows and greens in the iris, again layering colour until you achieve the correct tones. There are areas of reddish-brown in her eyes (I used Sienna Brown) and dark

ARTIST'S HINTS AND TIPS

- My coloured pencil drawing technique involves layering and blending several colours to achieve the desired colour tones and values. Start with light pressure and layer the colours from light to dark, gradually building up the layers before blending.
- Make sure to keep referring to the reference image throughout the drawing process to ensure accuracy.
- Take a break from the artwork, either for a few hours or a few days. Looking at the drawing with fresh eyes can help you see any adjustments that may need to be made. Taking a photo or holding the drawing up into a mirror also helps to give a new perspective.
- Draw what you see - even if it's not what you think it should be. Sometimes the translation of colours, light and shadows can be surprising until you see it come together, so stick with it.
- Prismacolor pencils are wax-based, so if you use a lot of layers of pencil in your drawing, the wax build up can sometimes create a white 'foggy' effect in some areas called wax bloom. Gently rubbing over the surface of your finished artwork with a clean soft cloth will lift off the excess wax, and using a spray fixative to seal the surface will stop this from re-occurring.
- Use a good quality reference photo. A high-resolution image that clearly shows detail is very important. I prefer to take my own photographs where possible to ensure the lighting and image clarity is just right. The higher the detail in the reference image, the more detail you can incorporate into the drawing.
- Be patient – and practice

STEP EIGHT

STEP NINE

greys across the top of the iris where the shadow falls. Leave the catch light in the eyes, these will be done last when all of the highlights are added.

STEP NINE

Review and add any final details or areas of stronger contrast/shadows where needed. I added more saturated colour to the eyes and black areas into the fur.

STEP TEN AND FINAL STEP

Using a sharp white pencil, draw in the whiskers, the hairs in the ears and the areas of white fur. I have found with Prismacolor pencils that the best way to add the highlights that I want to really stand out is to use white ink. Using a very fine paintbrush, paint in the catch light in the eyes and white areas of fur around the face and ears. Once complete, apply a spray fixative to seal the drawing surface.

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STEP TEN

Pamela Pretty

A Passion for Sea and Sky

Attracted to subjects with strong light emanating from them, this artist is currently focused on creating multi-layered pastel paintings.

Evensong

For as long as I can remember, I have been attracted to wild places. My favourite places are high rocky outcrops to view the setting sun, or the first rays of light as they kiss the morning hills.

The presence of water makes these scenes more memorable in my mind, so it is hardly surprising that my love for the wild open spaces fostered a love for bushwalking and also a desire to paint these places.

I believe that passion for one's subject is the critical element in painting. We need to connect in a meaningful way with the subjects we paint to bring them to life. By now you can probably tell that I am a passionate plein air painter! I find

Koi 3

Oberon

Range Reflection

myself attracted to subjects with strong light emanating from them, and love to look directly into the light to capture the last rays of the sun or the glow on the wet sand.

My main media are soft pastel, oil and watercolour, and I am currently focusing mostly on pastels. My pastel paintings are created using a multi-layered application and often an underpainting is used as well. This could be pastel dissolved with methylated spirits, watercolour or acrylic ink. The pastel is applied in a variety of strokes to give the painting movement and emphasise key areas.

My subjects are usually landscape or seascape with an emphasis on dramatic skies, water and light. I also enjoy portrait and wildlife painting.

Riptide

I have been painting and drawing from childhood, and received my first awards in my teens. I was very fortunate to have parents who were wonderful watercolour artists who shared their skills with me as I grew up.

In 2011-2012 I took up as Artist in Residence at St Vincent's Hospital, which was a wonderful opportunity for growth and development and I worked from a studio based in Kew. This was a very special time and I was very grateful for this opportunity.

I am currently teaching at Ringwood Art Society and have a watercolour and pastel class. Teaching is a great joy, and I love seeing my students developing their skills and growing as artists.

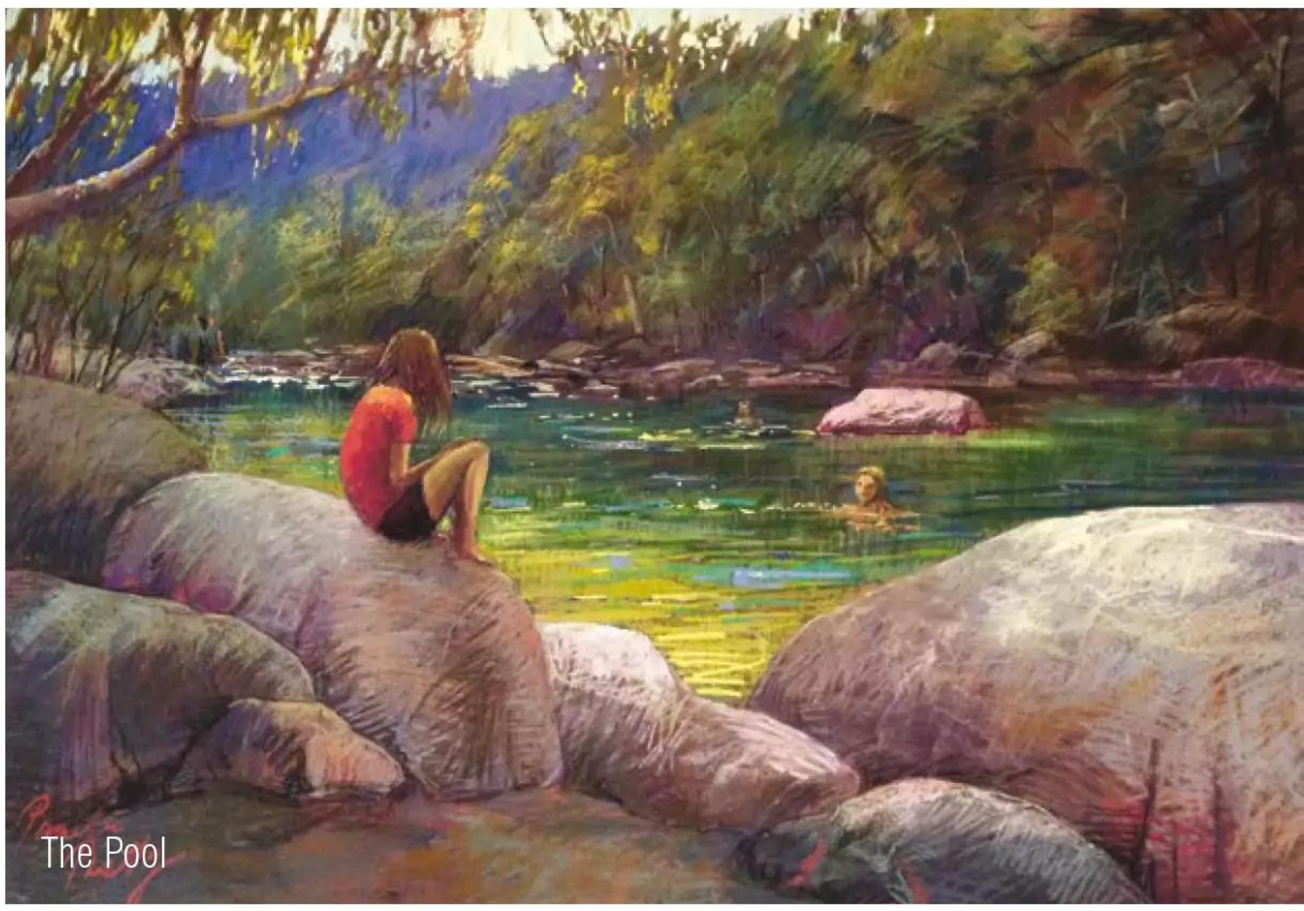
Underpainting techniques are a speciality, and one of my interests is using vibrant acrylic inks with pastel. I provide ink and pastel workshops for those interested in these techniques, and travel to country areas to teach these interesting techniques.

Having taught painting in acrylics for many years I was keen to try pastels and did so in 2005. I sought out some experts in the field to educate me in all forms of pastel painting. My tutors included Walter Magilton, Barbara Mc Manus, Raelene Sharpe, Grace Paleg, Regina Hona and Lyn Mellady.

Endless

Jan Juc

Blue Barn


The Pool

My connection with this medium was instant, and I was fortunate to receive a Best Pastel Award in the first show I entered as a pastellist, so I was encouraged to continue. I continued to receive awards for my pastels in many different shows, including Best Seascape at the Pastel Society of Victoria Australia (PSVA) 2012, followed by the Best in Show (PSVA) 2013.

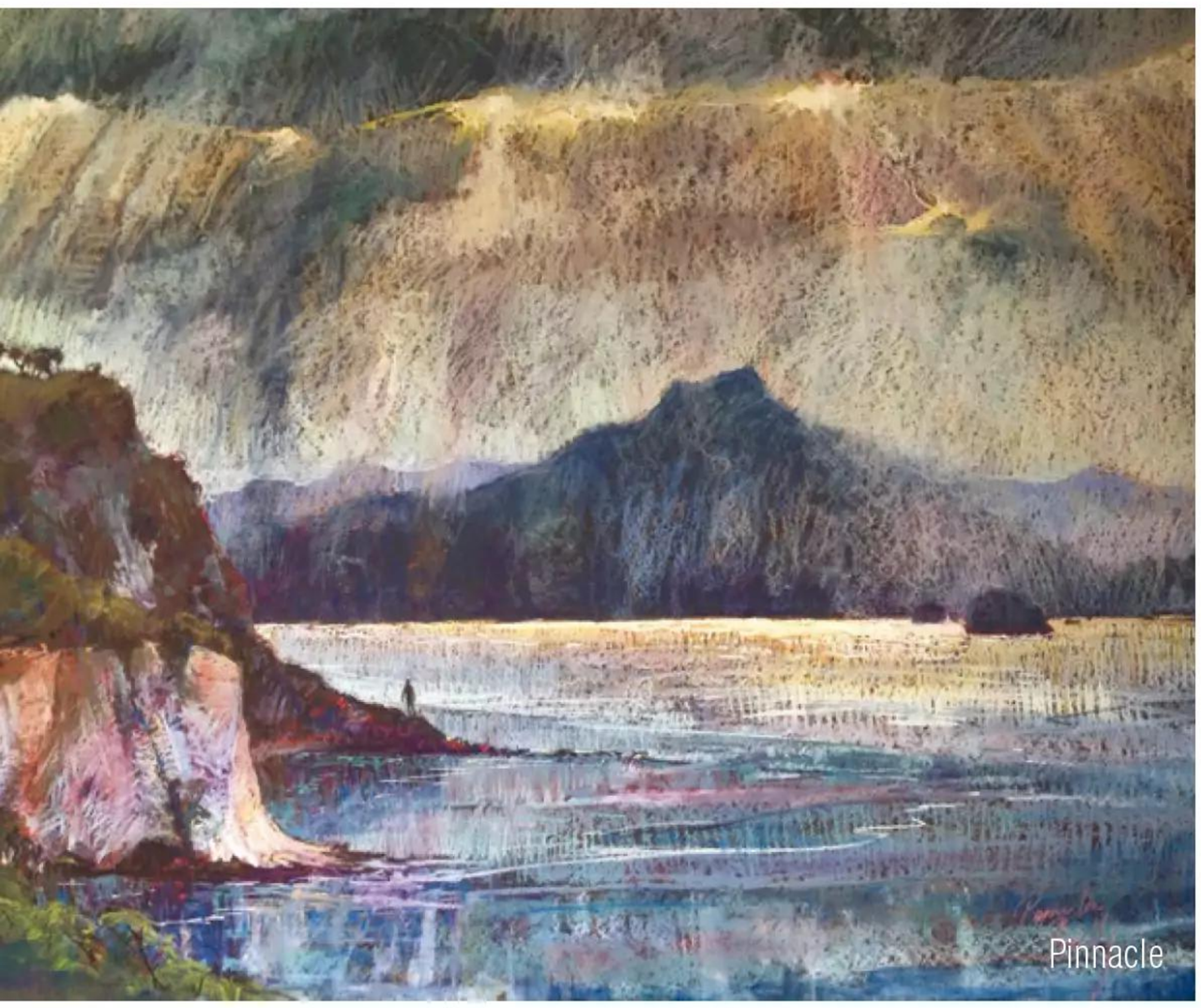
I was awarded two honourable mentions in the prestigious Pastel 100 International Pastel Competition 2016. "The Pool" and "Jan Juc" were published in the Pastel Journal in March –April 2013. I won the Pastel Prize at the Camberwell Rotary Art Show with "Lofty" in 2014, which was judged by David Chen.

Other awards include Seasonal winner at AGRA, (Winter 2013) and Best Pastel at the Mornington Rotary Art Show 2016.

I am a member of AGRA, where I was awarded Signatory Membership in 2013, and have served as a Counsellor. I am also a member of the Pastel Society of Victoria, Australia, and Ringwood Art Society where I am a Tutor in Pastel and Watercolour.

I have participated in solo and group exhibitions including:

- Expressions of Life 2007 (with Jan Lowe)
- Australian Art of Excellence Awards (Invitational) 2013
- Australian Art of Excellence Awards 2014
- Animals in Art 2014
- Australian Art of Excellence Awards 2015
- Unforgettable 7-19 Sept 2011
- Horizons Nov 2012-Feb 2013
- Australian Art of Excellence Awards 2016


Pinnacle

Refuge

Safe Harbour

My paintings are available for sale through a variety of channels including galleries and privately. You may view my paintings on my website and also on Gallery 247.Please contact me directly for more details of outlets in your area. Many of my paintings are held in private and corporate collections in many parts of Australia, New Zealand, Scotland, England and America.

The following are my contact details so please feel free to contact me if you would like to take part in my classes or one of my pastel and ink workshops, which are usually held during school holiday times.

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Silver Lining

Pastels

Golden Reflection

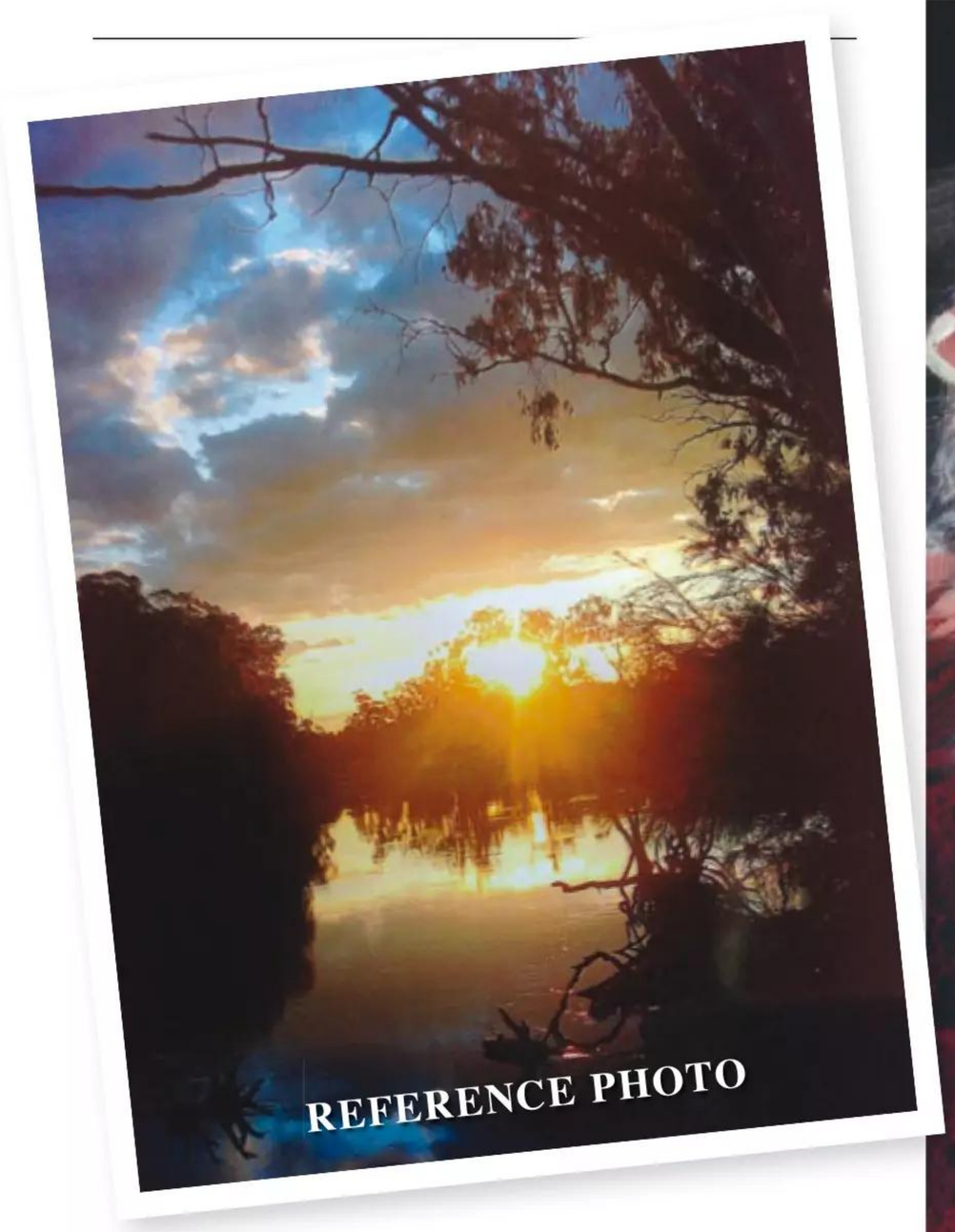
By Pamela Pretty

This subject is a beautiful scene photographed at a bend in the Murray River in the Echuca area of Victoria, where the sun seemed to linger forever in sleepy surrender of the day, and the mood was one of reflective peace.

FINAL STEP

MATERIALS

- Black cotton rag board 100 x 80cm
- White Colorfix primer
- ½" flat brush for applying the Colorfix
- Schmincke Aero Colour Acrylic Ink in Primary Yellow and Burnt Sienna
- Pastels – I use many different brands and prefer a range of hardness so that my strokes appear different in different areas of the painting.
  The following are a few of my favourite types:
  Rusty tone pastels, (particularly the Pamela Pretty set which has my favourite colours)
  – Terry Ludwig pastels
  – Schmincke pastels
  – Art Spectrum pastels, especially the dark shades
  – Conte pastels



STEP ONE

My first image shows the initial drawing in pink Conte pastel, which is kept very simple. The light areas are then underpainted with mixtures of white Colorfix primer which have been tinted with Burnt Sienna and Primary Yellow acrylic inks. This is to create a warm, light textured area for the sky and sky reflection.

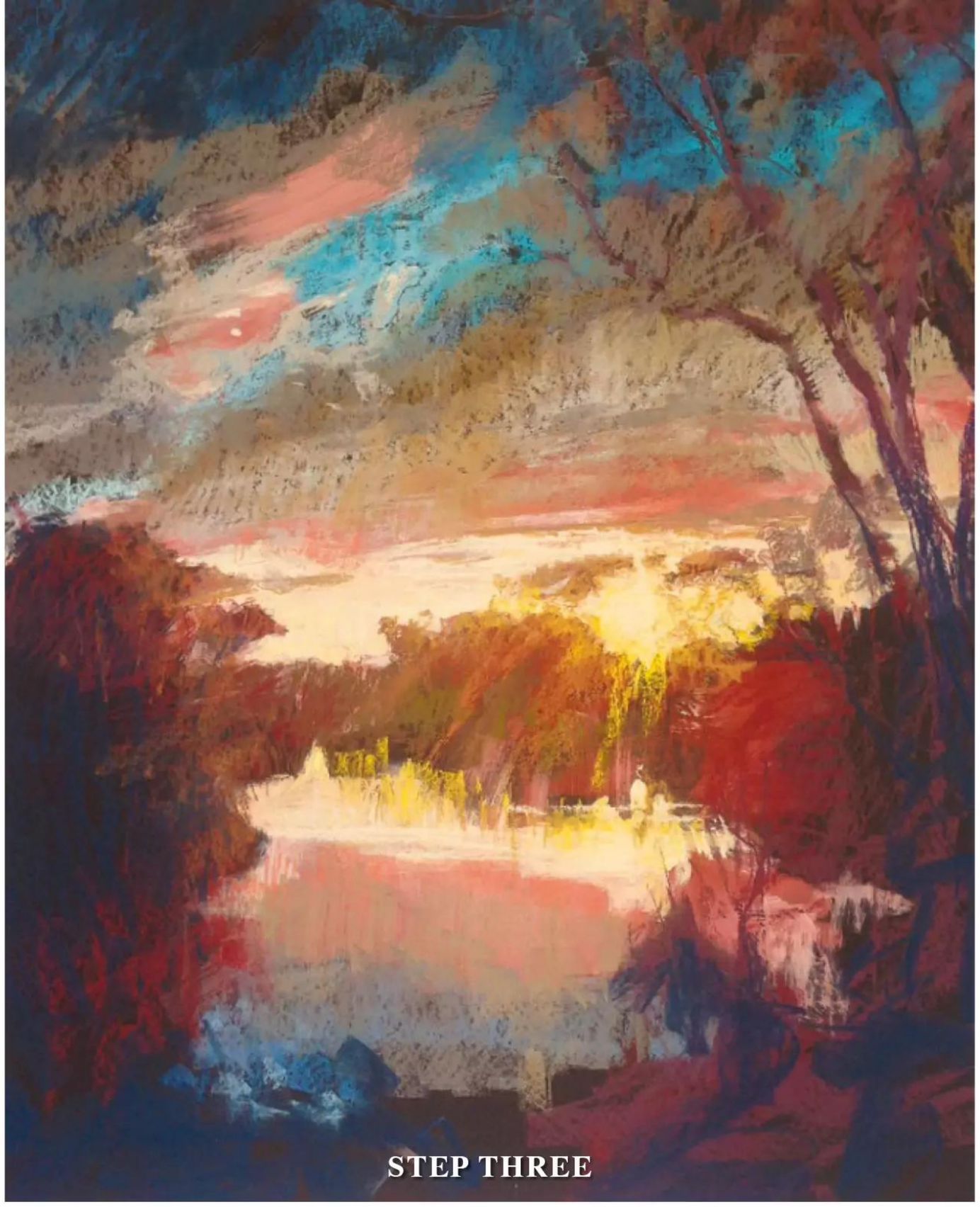
Underpainting these areas makes it much easier to create a glowing effect as I am underpinning my pastel layers with strong, warm, light colours.

STEP TWO

Working out from the underpainting, I keep the pastel layers thin and harmonious. A simple warm/cool colour palette is used initially. I am trying to lay down more colour than I need at this stage to give the painting life that will shine through from underneath. My intention is to layer over the top with more neutral colours later in the painting process.

STEP THREE

At this stage, all the undercolours are in place, and the structure is taking shape. The pastel is applied more broadly in these earlier layers. The painting still needs several more layers and detailing, but is beginning to be recognisable.



STEP THREE

STEP FOUR

STEP FOUR

Most key areas have been refined now with an extra layer. The sky particularly has been layered with more neutral colours to allow the remaining high chroma and high key areas to sing. The tonal balance between sky and tree was established, and the far bank of the river was pushed back with layers of receding colours.

FINAL STEP

The final detailing is done with the addition of the rock on the riverbank and the twigs in the water. The trees are worked on more, giving attention to the light falling in the correct places. Finally, the sky is balanced with a little more grey worked into some of the blue to take the eye to the focal point.

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ARTIST'S HINTS AND TIPS

- Look for dynamic shapes to give the painting a strong structure
- In the same way, look at the negative shapes that you are making as they create a vital part of the design.
- Use mark making in pastel to reflect different areas and attributes you are trying to convey. Experiment with making different marks.
- Try using Conte pastels to modify areas of soft pastel. They can be hatched over an area or an edge to create some wonderful subtleties. I often use them in skies or clouds to create interesting overlays and to soften edges.
- If you are taking reference photos, try to make some observations to use later. Colour sketches and written notes are especially useful.
- Take every opportunity to paint en plein air to hone your skills. Outdoor painting improves many aspects of painting if you persevere with it. It is also a great way to see the world, meet other artists and have adventures!

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A Stroke of Inspiration

Jacqueline Cleijne

Celebrating Animals and Nature

Beautiful interpretations of native and domestic life

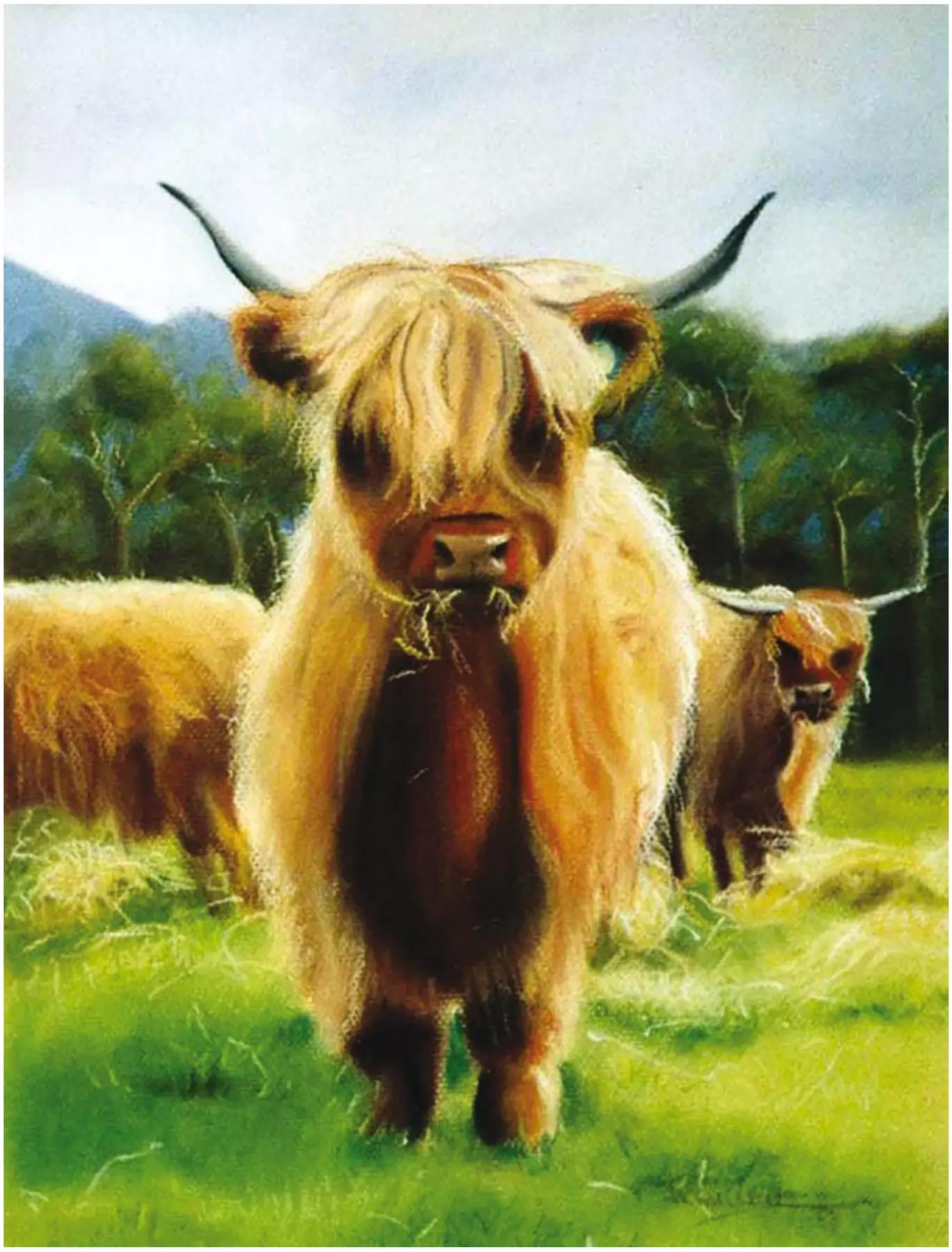
Jacqueline "Jacqui" Cleijne is a self-taught artist with a passion for depicting Tasmanian animals and nature, a delightful task given the state's natural picturesque serenity and unique native animal life. Born in Hobart, Tasmania, Jacqui lived and worked for a period as an Architectural Draftsperson in Queensland, returning back to Tasmania in the late 80's to pursue her drafting career and follow her passion for art. "My work as a draftsperson was full of challenges inherent in the building industry, but it taught me so much and it further developed my natural ability to draw." Many fundamental lessons for being a good artist were learnt and the drafting career gave Jacqui the tools to pursue her passion for art.

Her mother Robyn McNeil, who is also an accomplished artist, has naturally been influential in her career. "From a young age, my mother would take me to the park and to places surrounded by nature. I believe she planted the seed for me to grow as an artist, as I had a natural ability to draw, and she would nurture the seed by instilling into me an appreciation and love for nature. I remember being fascinated with little critters and especially animals. My mother noticed my ability to draw from a young age and I was lucky in that she did her best to allow me to develop myself as an artist early on."

Jacqui's own style is unique and she paints her subjects with passion and enthusiasm. Being self-taught, her experience has been gained through sketching regularly on location and reading about techniques used by many great artists. Doug Sealey, in particular for oil paintings and Jack Absalom, for his unique painting technique using a palette knife. These two artists were the most influential as she was growing up. "I have learnt to always paint from the heart, developing your own style which is unique to you."

Top right: Red Robin 2
Right: Hilander Cow

Opposite: Tawny Frogmouth Family Series



"Being authentic is important, to be able to stand out from others and to keep your artwork and creativity alive".

Jacqui is constantly seeking out wildlife subjects for her next painting. This often sees her venture into the state's wilderness and wildlife parks, local gardens and around her own home. She states it could be a simple autumn leaf with all its vibrant colours, a beautiful flower, bird, bumble bee, or tree that she turns into art. Jacqui always works with her own subjects, taking many photos and sketching on location where possible. "It brings me so much joy each day to combine my love for our unique animal life and nature and my passion for art."

Nature is not Jacqui's only source of inspiration. "My beautiful black and white cat named Cookie inspires me in ways I can't explain. I have many drawings and sketches of her. She is good practice, teaching me lots of patience and skills while drawing her from life."

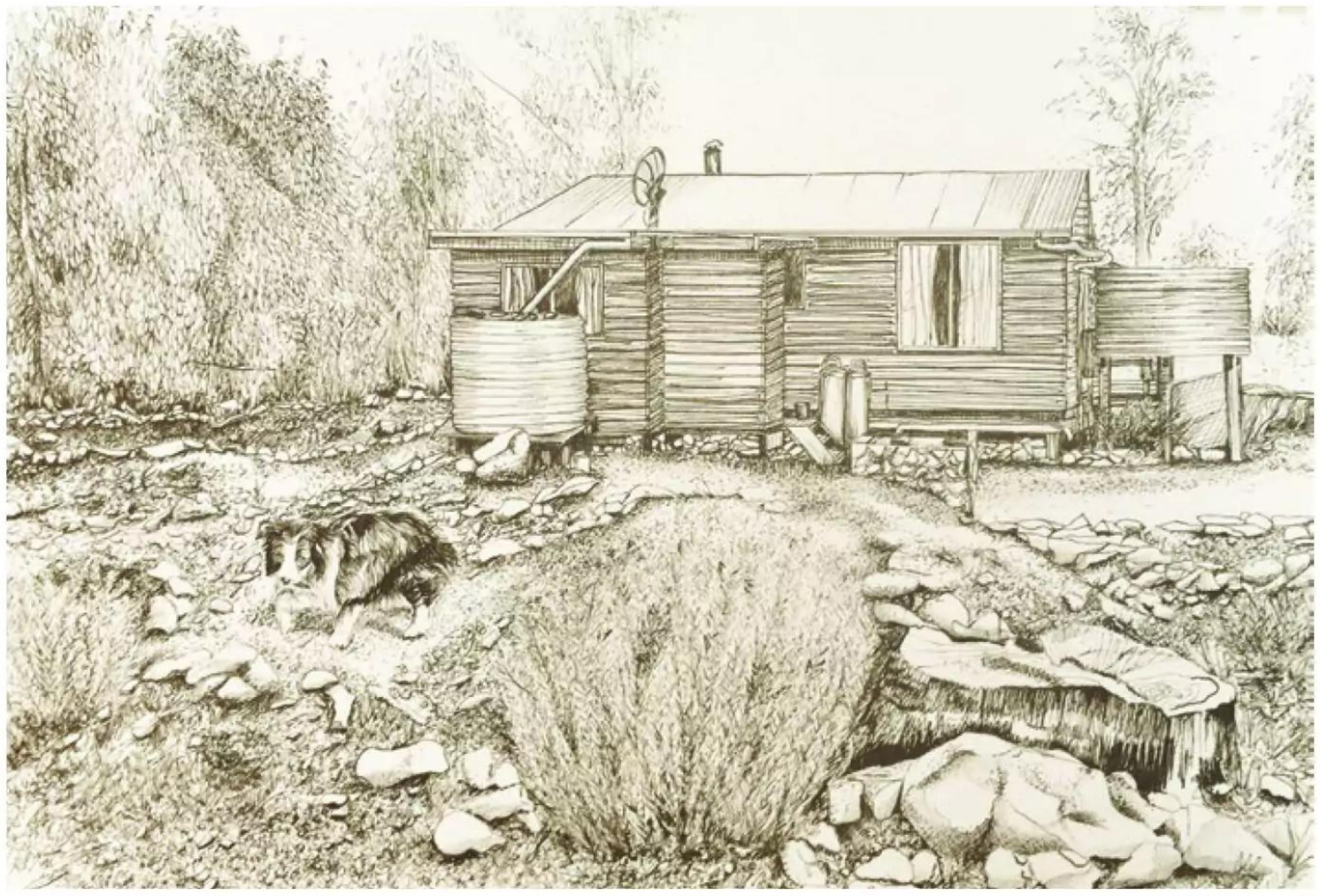
While her wildlife and nature paintings are popular Jacqui's main area of expertise is pet portraits, which have taken precedence over all other art. Many have commissioned Jacqui over the years to make beautiful, treasured artworks of their beloved animals, amazed by the likeness she manages to capture so perfectly. "All the animals I have had the privilege of immortalising into artworks over the years have brought so much joy to my life, the many furry faces, unique characters, from large to small pets, with some deceased pets, brought back to life. My love for animals is strong and I hold each and every one of them close to my heart."

Top left: Red Robin
Left: Tawny Frogmouth Family Series

Opposite
Top left: Tyler
Top right: Twighlight Glow
Bottom left: Madge
Bottom right: Wombat Sunday Snooze

Each new day brings Jacqui joy, knowing that she has the choice to create something new. “I like to draw first and foremost and enjoy painting for a change of technique. Art brings out my true self, my nature, and I feel a sense of calm when in the present and creating. It is being in the moment, mindfulness, connecting with my emotions.”

Jacqui has seen great success over the years, having exhibited in local group exhibitions. Her picturesque wilderness landscapes, seascapes and native animal paintings have been popular among galleries, with a growing number of people following her work, and her pet portraits gaining popularity more each year. She has had the privilege of having her work hung with some of the greats including Peter Glover, Kahn Wilson and Terry Gough. One particular exhibition saw her work displayed alongside famous watercolour artist Richard Bacon, a memorable highlight for Jacqui. Her work also hangs in collections throughout Australia and overseas, including England, Ireland, Canada, United States of America and Japan.



Above left: Tulip
Above right: Lake Crescent Shack
Below left: Dewey Leaves
Below right: “I'm the prettier one!” Little Corellas

Opposite
Top: Rhododendron Delight
Bottom: Green Rosella

She lists The Archibald Portrait Prize, The Doug Moran Portrait Prize and The Glover Art Prize as a few of her favourite art prizes.

As with any artist, Jacqui has learnt many lessons over the years. The first is that learning to draw is critical in learning to paint. Mistakes can be assets and if it is wrong, it is better to leave it rather than fix or start anew. Sketching and drawing from life helps build strength and confidence within, and battling with the elements with plein air painting teaches patience and persistence. “I have learnt a lot about myself during my art journey and have found art a mindful experience like no other.” Lastly, Jacqui states that one does not need to be perfect or sell in excess to be successful. One just needs

to start to enjoy the journey without expectations. “It is better to paint for yourself and have no public than to paint for the public and have no self”.

EXHIBITIONS

- Walch’s Group Art Exhibition, Hobart Tasmania
- Tasmania Shop Gallery, Hobart Tasmania – 2007
- Salamanca Gallery Art Prize Finalist, Hobart Tasmania 2007
- Saddlers Court Gallery, Richmond Tasmania – 2008

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Pencils

Tyler

Jacqui Cleijne

In loving memory of our beautiful dog, whose favourite game was looking under rocks for lizards.

FINAL STEP

MATERIALS

- Prismacolor Premier coloured pencils:
  - Eyes: PC916 Canary Yellow, PC941 Light Umber, PC943 Burnt Ochre, PC948 Sepia, PC935 Black
  - Fur: PC1051 Warm Grey, PC1074 French Grey, PC941 Light Umber, PC943 Burnt Ochre, PC948 Sepia, PC946 Dark Brown, PC947 Dark Umber, PC935 Black
  - Rocks and background: PC1051 Warm Grey, PC943 Burnt Ochre, PC944 Terra Cotta, PC949 Silver and Graphite Pencils 2B & 3B
- Graphite Pencils HB, 2B, 3B, 6B
- Putty Rubber
- Prismacolor Sharpener
- Renoir University 300gsm Smooth White Cartridge Paper
- Solid board to clip paper
- Tissues or paper towels
- Fixative

STEP ONE

STEP ONE

Start with the eyes, building up layers of colour, light colours first building to dark. Take care not to colour the whole area inside the eyes, leaving areas of white paper for showing the special 'glint' in their eyes. The first colour Canary Yellow will be the base colour. Light Umber is used to add shadow for depth on the inside of the eyes around the edges, followed by Burnt Ochre to add more depth and colour. PC948 Sepia and PC935 Black for the pupil, leaving white paper for the special 'glint' in the dog's eyes and for the highlights.

This stage is crucial, as the character and true essence of the animal starts with their eyes, ie; their expression, character, colour, softness, light etc. Keep building up the inside of the eyes using a soft hand, taking notice of light, dark, form, shape and depth.

STEP TWO

Continue layering with colour for the nose, remembering to leave some white paper for the lightest lights and silver for the next lightest. Move on to start to build the fur surrounding the eyes and onto the dog's face using

STEP TWO (A)

STEP TWO (B)

STEP THREE (A)

STEP THREE (B)

pencils, with a nice point, which will bring out the separation of the fur layer over layer. Softly build curved lines following the flow and direction of the dog's fur, layering over colours from light to dark, paying attention to light and dark, shade and highlight. Leave any light areas white paper. Continue with this pattern, following the direction of the fur, working outwards from the eye area.

STEP THREE

Continue building up the fur, from the eyes outwards into the broader areas of the dogs face, moving to the dog's right ear (working from left to right of the paper to prevent smudging). The nose can be completed at this stage and it should have the look of a 'cold wet nose'. Continue layering light colours to dark, using a soft hand to apply line over line, building up the layers of fur. Do not use a back and forward motion, but more of a sweeping soft motion following the furs direction. Use the darkest colour for shadows under fur that is highlighted, as per Tyler's lovely highlighted tufts of fur under his eyes. Leave white paper for the lightest highlights and use silver for the subtle shadows over the white, which picks up the glossy coat of the dog.

STEP FOUR

Move onto the body of the dog and the background areas, filling in the elements of space the dog is set in. Keep building up layers of colours from light to dark using different strokes and applying varying pressure to achieve the depth of colour and texture that suits your subject. In this example I put Tyler in a natural setting, showing rocks behind him which he loved to dig under, finding lizards! It is good to

STEP FOUR

STEP FIVE

ARTIST'S HINTS AND TIPS

- Choose a subject that is pleasing to you and make lots of small sketches getting familiar with your subject. For example; wildlife animals are easier to find in wildlife parks and sanctuaries where they are visible. Spend time getting to know their habitat, pay attention to their features ie; shape, fur texture, feet, claws, feathers, their eyes and so on.
- Take lots of reference photos and notes.
- Learn to draw before trying to paint, as this will improve your overall experience and technique, making your work more balanced and appealing. To do this, draw from life to master perspective.
- Try different mediums and find one that suits your style and preference best.
- Also try a variety of substrates, pertaining to the different mediums. For example I like to use different watercolour papers from smooth to rough, depending on my subject. For oil paintings I use linen for pet portraits due to its smoother surface and cotton canvas for landscapes.
- When starting oil painting, learn to use the three primary colours only ie; red, blue, yellow and mix these three to make most of the colours for your subject. Add Titanium White for lightening the colours. Buy a colour wheel to help with learning about colour and tone.
- Mistakes happen often, allow yourself to make many, which will be rewarding in the long run. It is better to leave a mistake, than try to fix it. Sometimes mistakes can improve a painting. If it is unfixable, paint over it, tear it up or start again.
- Never copy or compare yourself to others, be true to yourself and find your uniqueness. It is not important how many artworks you sell, it is more important to enjoy the journey.
- Explore your creativity and enjoy yourself. Have fun!

STEP SIX

put an animal in the scene where they are most comfortable, their natural environment, as it will bring out his/her true character. Take reference photos to use more than one photo if needed to make a composition from both the animal and a different background, if unable to get a photo of the dog in the scene you would like.

STEP FIVE

Move into the final stages of the drawing, completing the background and working on the foreground. Add detail to the dog's fur in this stage. To achieve the white fur over the background colour I used a putty rubber to draw the wispy fluffy edges of the fur in over the graphite background. This sets the background behind the dog. I then built up the background shadows and area under the dog's chin. To give the white fur some definition, use the 2B Graphite, PC1051 Warm Grey and PC949 Silver to add some shadows. Fine tune the detail and add character marks, ie; the freckle near Tyler's nose, his collar and the fine shadows between the eyes using a soft HB graphite pencil. Add wispy bits of fur around the edges of the dog, using a light colour blended with darks. This will soften the overall coat of the dog.

STEP SIX AND FINAL STEP

The finished artwork should look like a work of art, not a photograph. Take the time to go over the whole drawing carefully and add the final touches of detail and then put it aside and walk away, so as not to fiddle with it, which, from experience, can overwork a drawing. It is time now to sign your work. To finish, I use a good quality fixative to spray my work lightly to prevent smudging. Use an acid free, colour free fixative. By doing this it protects the drawing from smudges, light damage and transference of the pencil dust sticking to the glass once the drawing is framed.

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Drawing Animals

Contributed by John Cornwell

A previously featured artist in Artist's Palette magazine has prepared this tutorial article to share his drawing techniques for the benefit of our readers.

During my 38 years as a professional artist, I have become well known for painting animals – more by accident than design; in particular horses, cattle and dogs.

Strangely enough, one of my best known works is the bronze sculpture of Matthew Flinders' cat 'Trim', who resides on the window ledge of the New South Wales State Library in Macquarie Street, Sydney.

When I was a student at the National Art School, a very enlightened teacher was sufficiently interested in my efforts to point out the similarities in the anatomy of very many animals – which all evolved from basically the same structure.

Every such animal has a head, a neck, rib cage, shoulder blades, forearm, elbow, lower arm and a great variety of forms of structure representing the human wrist and hands. Strangely enough, a lot (even with hooves) still have a similar bone structure. All these animals also have backbones, hips, buttocks and thighs.

To make convincing drawings, it is essential to understand how your subject is constructed – no matter if it is a house or a horse.

Just to make life more interesting, see if you can count the number of breeds of horses. All are instantly recognisable as being equine, but you have to decide which of their features are different.

It does not matter whether the animal is large or small; the head shape of all breeds is fundamentally the same. A thoroughbred has a straight nose; whereas the beautiful, graceful Arab has a distinctive inward kink to its nose. It is an altogether more delicate animal with slender cannon bones and hooves. This does not

mean that one animal is more beautiful than the other; just that they are different.

I could go on forever about how the stock horse differs from the popular American Quarterhorse. The latter has a very pretty, smaller head; but a bigger, rounded rump – specially bred into him to give enormous power and speed for short distances. These horses are finely bred for working cattle in enclosed areas. They have to be fast and manoeuvrable to cut out lively cattle. This gives them a slightly downhill look from the rump to the withers.

The mighty Shire horses and the Clydesdales are bred for pulling great weights. Their great necks and shoulders and cow-hocked hindquarters give them extra pulling power.

The Shire is the bigger and stronger of these two breeds. A pair of Shires is claimed to have moved a load of 19 tons from a standing start. They are the second-strongest animals after elephants.

The Clydesdale, on the other hand, while a massive horse, is a bit smaller and thinner and moves with a high-stepping gait which gives it a speed it can maintain for miles.

For some of my paintings, I like to do historical reconstructions of Cobb and Co coaches, Australian Light Horsemen, and artillery teams. Each of these has a type of horse that was specially developed; and they are types that you rarely see these days.

Cobb and Co brought their own breed out from America, but quickly interbred with the local stock for their coaching horses. They were not very good looking, but were splendid for their work – having very strong and enlarged necks and shoulders, and strong hindquarters. A very similar horse was used in artillery work, but the Light Horse 'Waler' was a lighter riding horse – very strongly built with heavier lower limbs. The endurance of the Light Horse Walers made them sought-after for cavalry mounts all over the world.

Going to smaller horses, there are dozens of different pony types. Generally they are barrel bodied with short legs and little hooves; and heavy, arched necks; with pretty little heads, long manes and tails … but some are more like the small sized horses which were very popular for pulling light vehicles.

To draw a horse, or any animal, you must first decide what attitude you want: Standing; full side on; angled towards you or away; front on or back on.

On your paper, lightly give yourself some guides as to the general shape and size. Then start to sketch in the body shape, neck, head and legs. It is best to consult some good reference such as photographs or illustrations. I have attached some diagrams which show the proportions.

My advice is to get the best reference you can. Get a book (or books) on anatomy, and photographs of horses (or whatever animal you have chosen) from all the angles, and in various poses and colours.

A lot of valuable reference can be found at shows, draught horse field

The Prancing Stallion 1

The Prancing Stallion 2

The Prancing Stallion 3

days and campdrafts. If you are interested in horse-drawn vehicles, they also have plenty of shows. You will meet interesting people, too – some who may become firm friends.

I have amassed a great deal of experience and knowledge over the years. I spent a lot of childhood time in the country – including jackerooing, mustering and droving. Later, I did long trail rides into remote areas, in the Snowy Mountains, and elsewhere along wild rivers and across plains. I not only enjoyed the scenery, but closely observed the actions of horses and riders. I don't know how many shows my wife and I have attended, taking thousands of photographs. I acquired several harness vehicles – and 21 years ago I moved from the city to a beautiful country area where I had old barns and cow bales and I acquired a collection of farm machinery and equipment.

Numerous books on equine subjects found their way into my library; all of them have been useful to me.

Most important of all: Like a concert pianist you have to practise, practise and practise … don't be satisfied until your work is the best you can do.

I see so many terrific paintings spoiled because they have ill-formed horses or cattle. It's a lot of work to get them right, but it is very satisfying.

THE HORSE'S HEAD

A good way to start is to draw a triangle with the apex between the ears and the line between the two eyes being the base of the triangle. Draw a longer narrower triangle for the nose, with a box-like structure at the bottom.

The ears need special attention. Whenever riding or driving a horse, you can tell what has got his interest.

The nostrils also show a calm horse, when they are relaxed. An angry or galloping horse has his ears laid back and nostrils flaring to a trumpet shape; and a wild look in his eyes.

Harness can be useful as it casts shadows which will help to show the form.

THE PRANCING STALLION

I make a few lines on my paper, trying to get rhythm and action while keeping the general proportions correct.

Next, I elaborate … making corrections as I go; starting to express some form until I think it is alright … and then I go on to the next step.

I do not want to put in too much anatomy, so I take a 5B pencil, and select the most important low tones first, and work on them – and then gradually work on the areas of higher tone, adding form to all the important muscles until I think I have done all it is wise to do. I could carry on working up

every rib and muscle, but overworking a drawing causes it to lose its freshness and makes it stiff and lifeless. Much of the art is in knowing when to stop.

DIAGRAM SHOWING PROPORTIONS

In this diagram, the different coloured lines are all the same length.

Draw a rectangle so that the length (green) is twice the height (red).

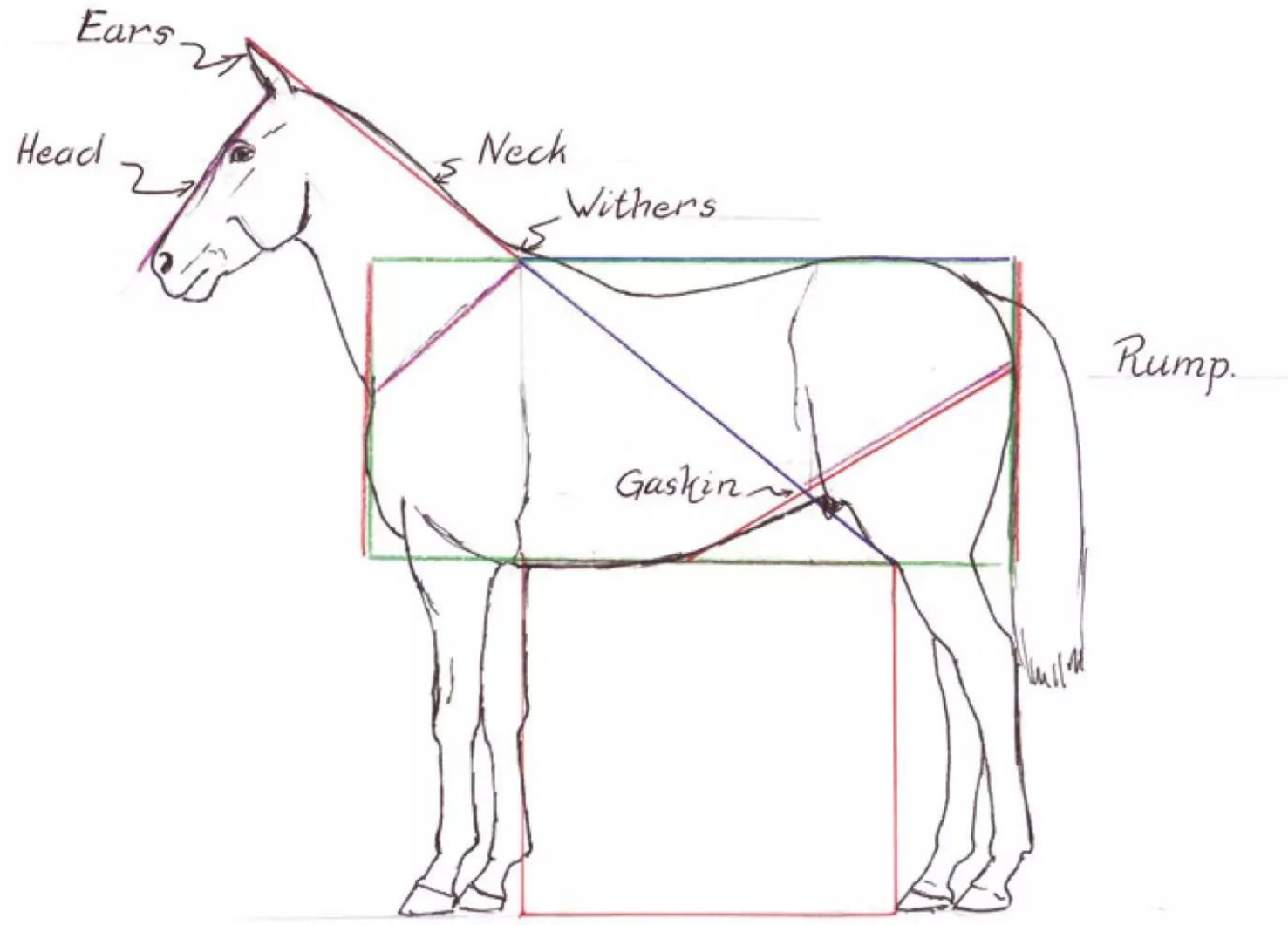
One quarter in from one end, draw a square equal to the height of the rectangle (red). This gives you the length of the legs, as well as the position of the legs.

Extend the red line at the back of the forelegs, up to the top of the rectangle, and this will position the withers.

From the right-hand top corner of the red square, draw a line to the withers; and extend it the length of the red lines. This extended line gives you the back of the neck to the tip of the ears.

Halfway up the left end of the rectangle, draw a line to the withers. The length of this line (purple) is also the length of the head and the distance between the gaskin and the rump.

Again, from halfway along the green rectangle, draw a line 30 degrees (red) and you have the position of the gaskin and the point of the rump.

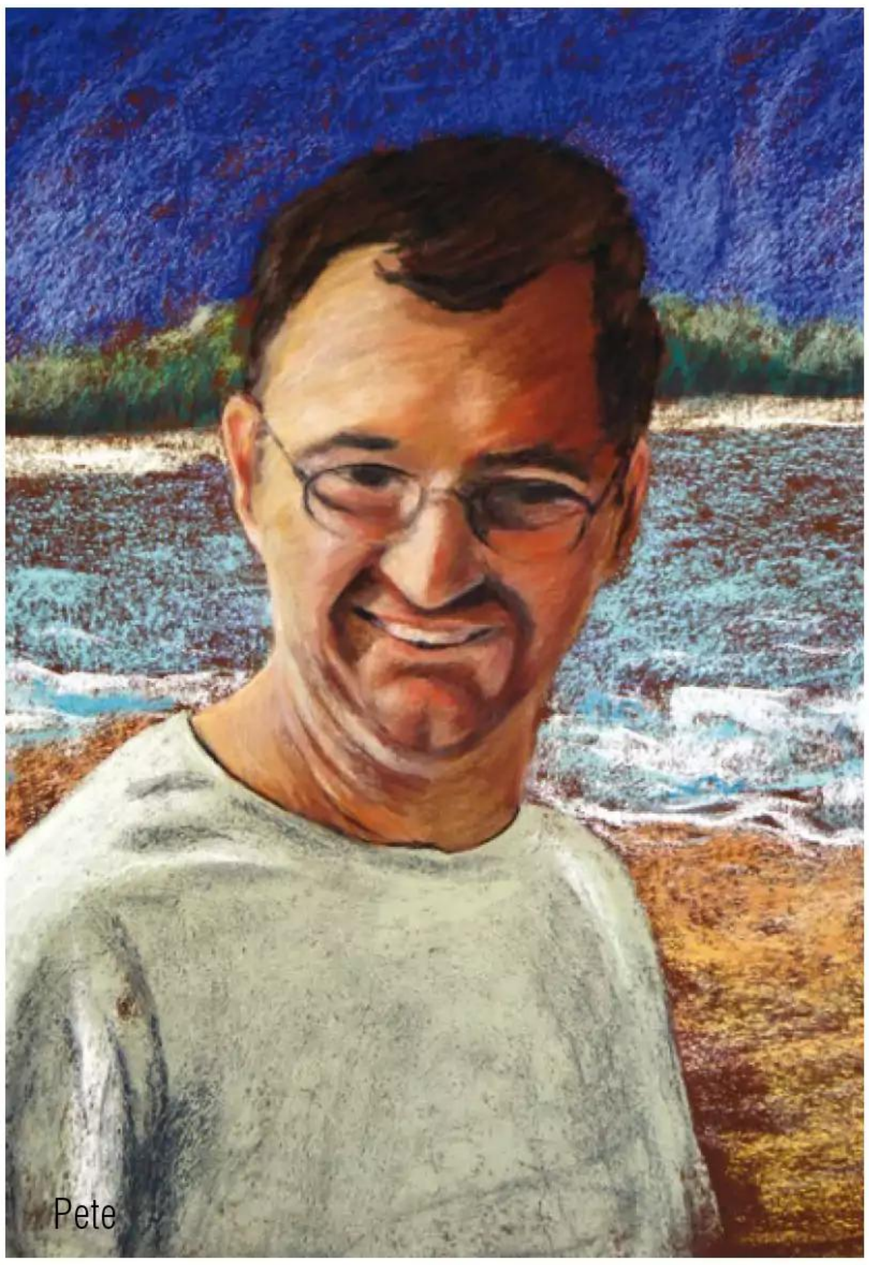


The diagram is meant only as an approximate guide because there are no hard and fast rules. All horses and breeds have their own peculiarities, as in humans. The horse in the diagram is a thoroughbred stallion … but it is pretty safe as a general guide. ■

Terry Bailey

My 'Arty' Life

Terry shares his tale on how art now colours his life.


Pete

Rainbow portrait

Drawing/painting has really become a passion for me, and rarely a day goes by without of some form of "arty" activity. I find it immensely absorbing and satisfying, and yes, sometimes frustrating.

Apart from the odd two to four-day workshop, I would refer to myself as self-taught.

I am continually amazed at the "third dimension" or depth that is created on a flat surface. With the simple stroke of a brush or pen, a nose can come forward, or a tree pushed back, and how the use of shadows and reflections will give sparkle and light to a painting.

When arriving on Bribie Island in Queensland in 2004, following a working life in the steel industry, I thought I would take up golf and my wife would do "arty things". How wrong was I!

After enrolling in a beginner's pencil drawing class (about 2006) with Burnie Hankin at the U3A (University of the Third Age) here on Bribie, I became hooked on the "arty things", and my wife is now the golfer.

I now tutor two beginner's/ intermediate pencil drawing classes

Grandma's cheeky budgie Tweet

Ladies day out

Woman in Cairo

Tiger dreaming

each week, and lead a life-drawing group, plus attend the pastel work-together group at the Bribie Island Community Art Centre.

I first chose pastels as my medium because they felt a natural progression of the stroke work and blending used with graphite pencils, and they were inexpensive.

I have recently become a member of the Australian Pastel Association, which I recommend to any budding pastelist. The demonstrations by master- pastelists, and techniques displayed at each monthly meeting are invaluable to beginners and experienced alike.

I now have other mediums in my bag of tricks, including ink and wash, acrylic, water colour, and charcoal, and I continue with my love of graphite pencil. But pastel is still my main medium.

I have received a number of Highly Commended awards and in July 2011 won first prize

at the Matthew Flinders Art competition's "Contemporary" division, with an acrylic work.

Works commissioned by friends are a joy. It's quite a buzz to visit a friend's home and be greeted by a painting I have created, and also to hear their comments.

I have also written illustrated and published a children's book "Grandma's Cheeky Budgie TWEET", released in September 2011.

Email: tweet111@tpg.com.au

What me worry

Mel's Hibiscus

Pastels

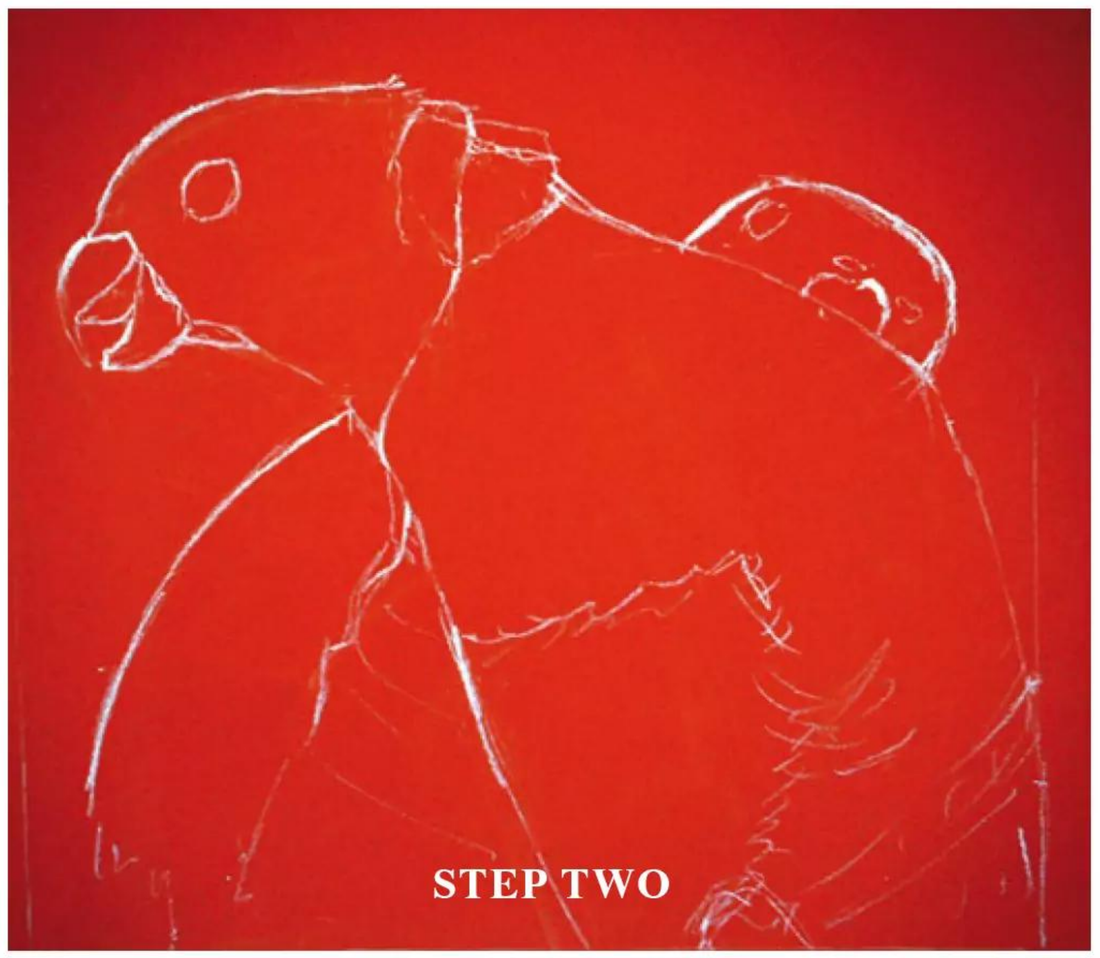
Rainbow Lorikeets

By Terry Bailey

The vivid beauty of these birds is wonderfully captured in Terry's artwork.

FINAL STEP

STEP ONE



STEP TWO

MATERIALS

- Art Spectrum Colourfix Paper, Terra Cotta
- Pastels: Mainly Art spectrum, Rembrandt, and 1 or 2 hard, Faber – Castell
- Colours: Cadmium Deep Red; Flinders Blue Violet, (dark and mid tone); Grass Green; Australian Leaf Green; Spectrum Yellow; Bright Yellow; Orange; Ultramarine; Sky blue; Terra Cotta, and various tones of each.

I love to use primary colours, and these Rainbow Lorikeets certainly gave me the opportunity to do that. I work on Colourfix paper because of its holding ability. I like to push the pastel hard and deep into the paper to get a finished result in one stroke, thus using the brilliant, instantaneous colour that pastels can give. Obviously this cannot be done with every stroke, as mixing on the paper will always be required. However in this painting it is easy to see many of the first strokes made are still evident in the final stage. The "terra cotta" colour of the paper used here in this is one of my favourites. It makes a good under-paint, or can stand alone as a background.

STEP ONE

My palette. I select some colours before I start, and add to them as required.

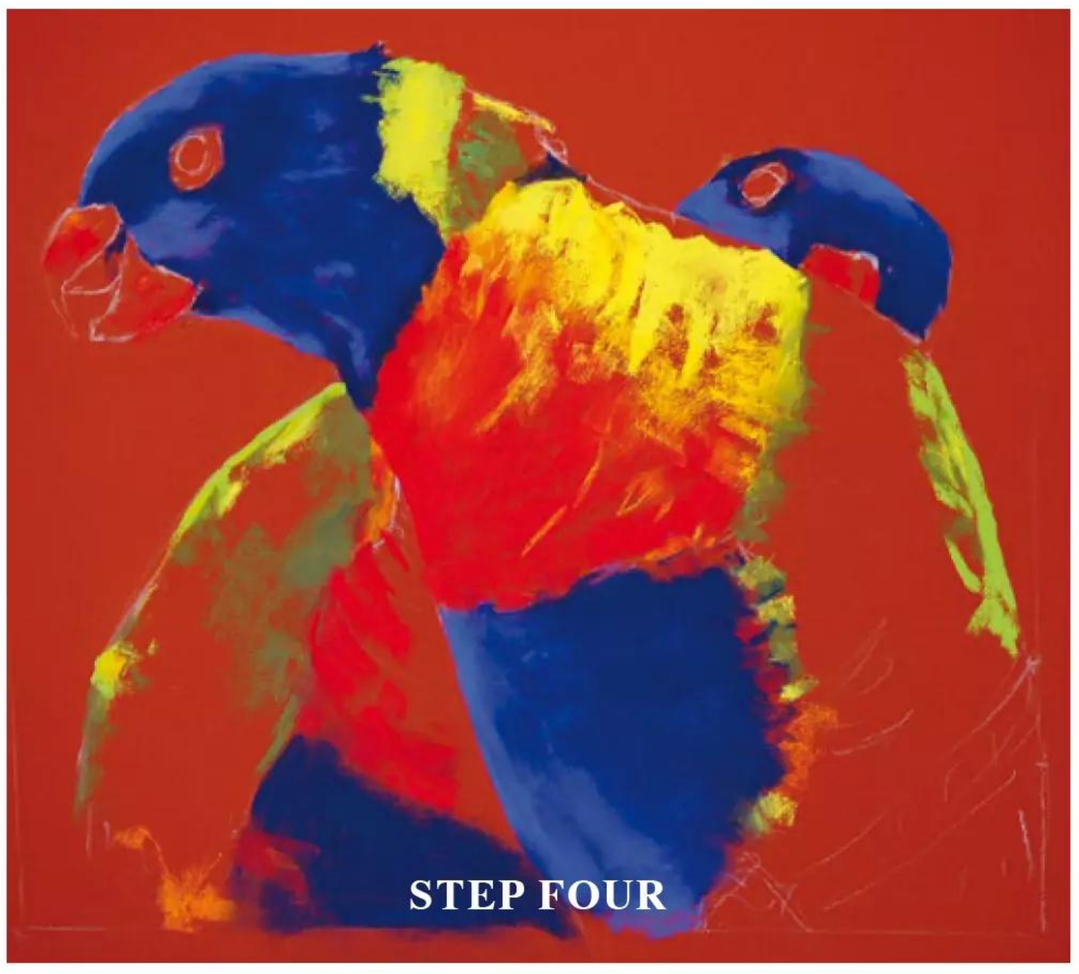
STEP TWO

The "Drawing" was done with pastel pencil. A neutral colour, very lightly applied, and later dusted off, so as to be just visible.

STEP THREE

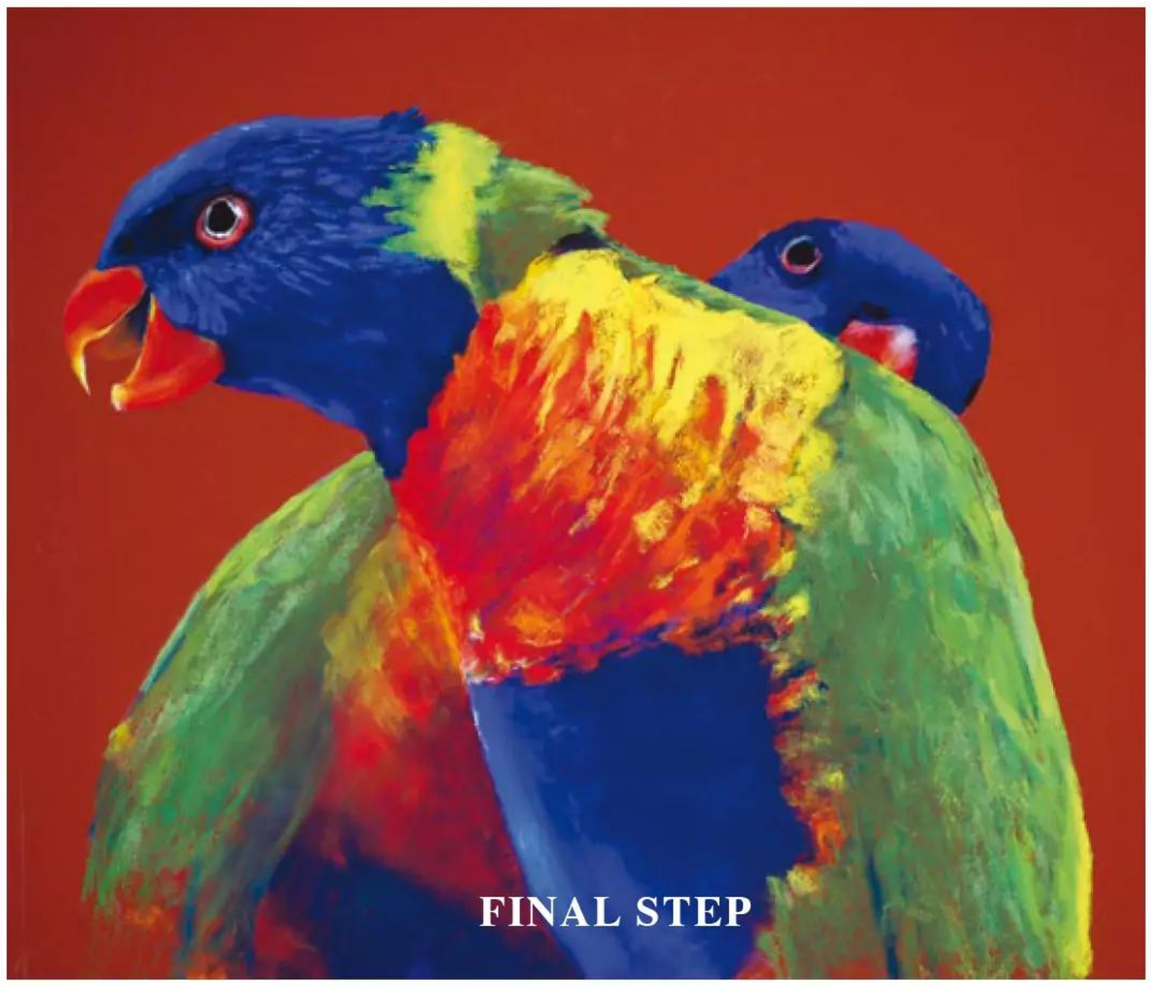
Fun time. I am searching for basic colour and tone, but these guys are so bright the colours pick themselves. I use small pieces of pastels flat on their sides. This spreads the load

STEP THREE



STEP FOUR

STEP FIVE


FINAL STEP

on the pastel and leaves a lovely variation of tone with each stroke.

STEP FOUR

Here, I'm still searching for colour and tone, and the under painting starts to build nicely. I have pushed the pastel hard into the paper to produce a strong base to apply other colour over if required. Being aware of the oranges (red/yellow) and greens (yellow and blue), that I will be looking for later.

STEP FIVE

As I progress I am conscious of the contours to be achieved so as not to leave the painting looking flat. The light tones on the chest and back of the front bird seem to have done this nicely.

FINAL STEP

Time to start placing the "jewellery" ie the sharp details. These details can be critical to a painting as they show the personality and mood of the subject. I think these guys are looking quite relaxed and happy. ■

ARTIST'S HINTS AND TIPS

- Use a separate container to store the pastels you are using on the current painting. This saves time searching for the colour you used previously. I tend to preselect only a few colours for my work as I am never sure of where the painting will take me.
- Keep the pastels clean. Have a rag handy to wipe each pastel when putting it back into the "selection" container. This also gives you a few seconds' break in which to admire you work, and makes it easier to see the right colour in the container.
- If you need a sharp edge for a fine line, try scoring around the pastel with your finger/thumb nail before breaking the stick. This will give a clean, controlled sharp break.
- You should always have your work upright or even leaning a little towards you at the top. This will allow the pastel dust to fall from the paper and not lay on your precious work. A folded news paper tray is all I use to catch the falling dust. Do not blow off the dust. It will only float in the air and generally make the whole area uncomfortable to work in.
- Finishing: My preferred procedure is simple. Taping glassine paper or similar over the painting I place them on a hard smooth surface (glassine paper on top). Using a rolling pin and plenty of pressure, I roll over the whole surface of the painting, in all directions, as this pushes the pastel into the paper to reduce dust fall out later, particularly at framing time. This action also seems to brighten the painting by bursting the tiny balls of pastel on the surface and pushing them into the paper. I then will leave the painting on the backing board for one or two weeks, out of harm's way, to let the pastel surface "acclimatise". This also helps reduce dust falling later. Last steps before framing will be to check and touch up the highlights if need be, and one more final rolling.
- To remove pastel I prefer Faber-Castell "putty rubbers", after first brushing off with an old paint brush.
- I also use a collection of various size and shape blenders, some rubber and some paper. I find the rubber blenders particularly good for tidying up edges, and also for dragging through "water" to create reflections.

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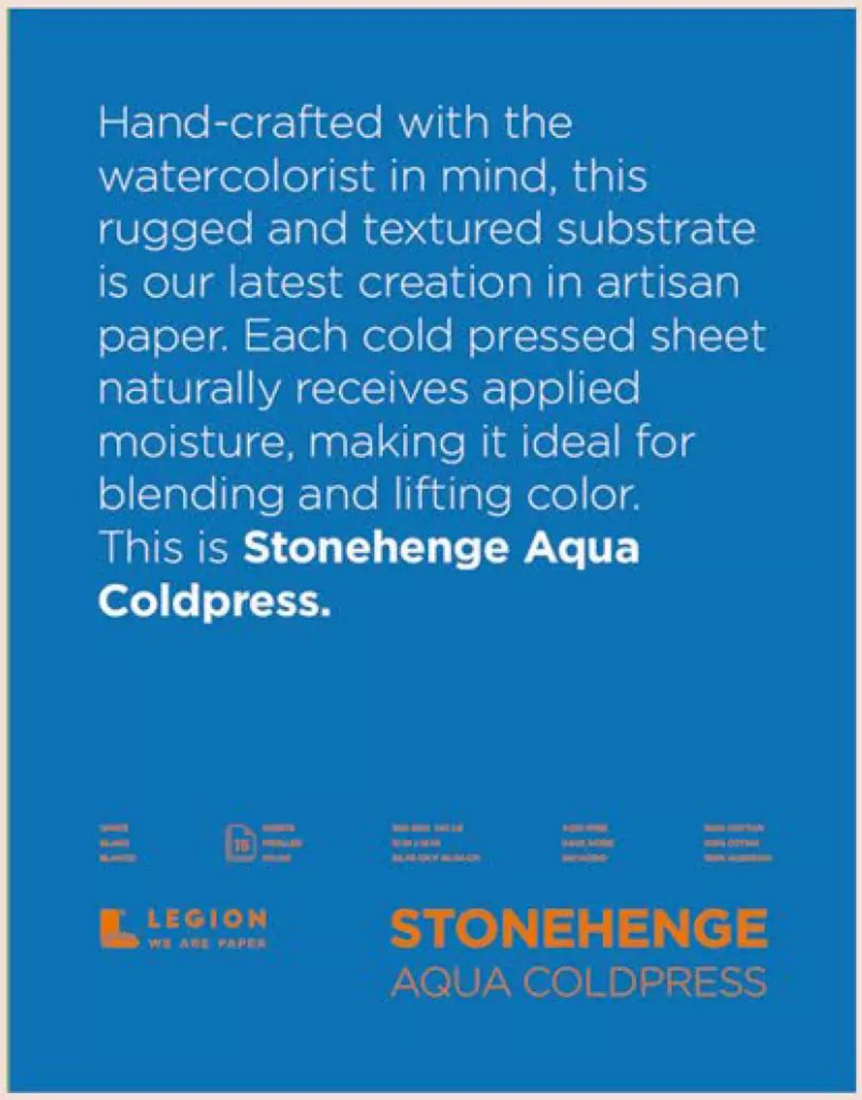

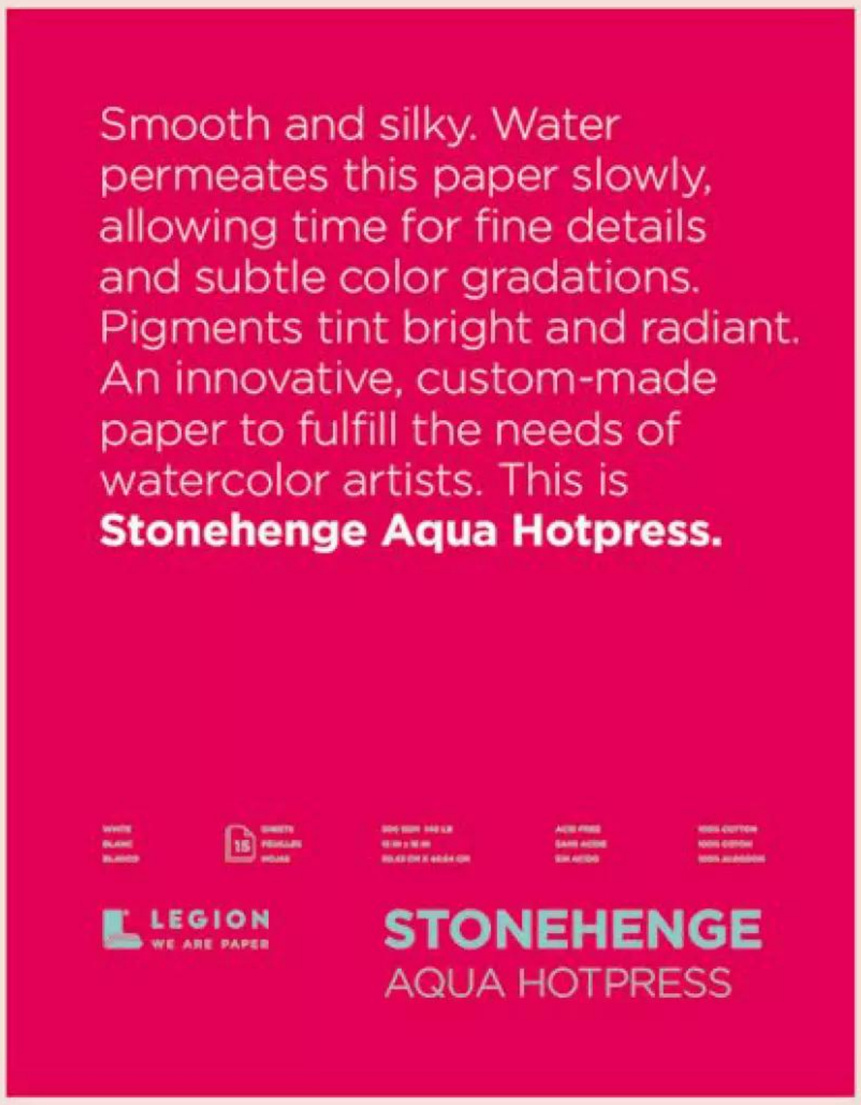

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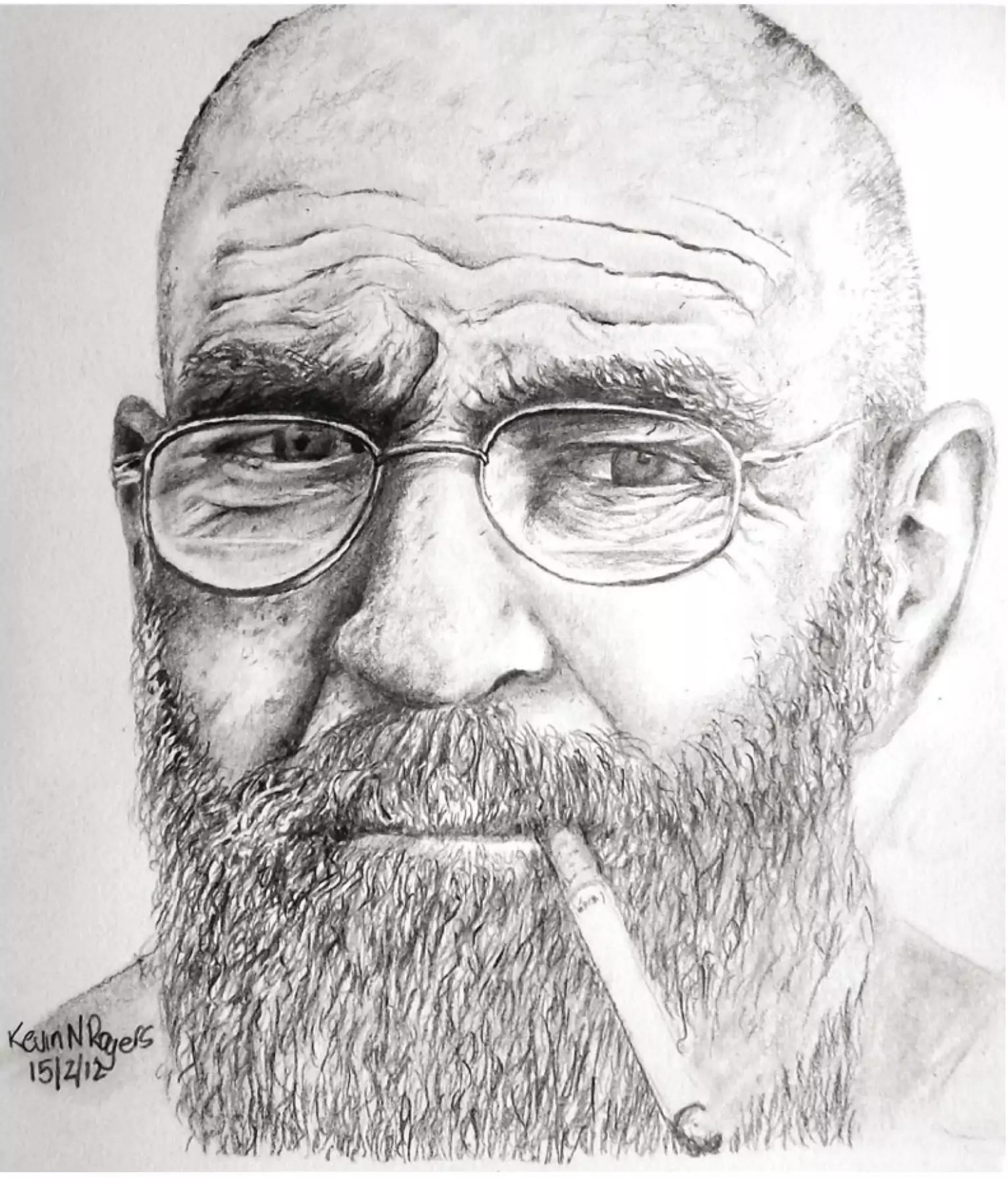
Kevin N. Roger

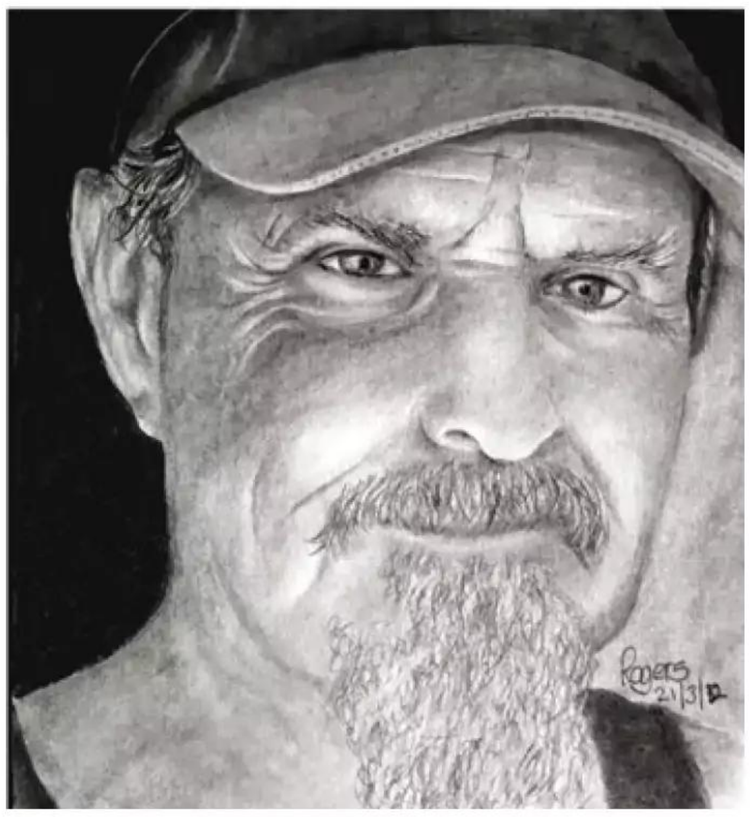
Back to the Drawing Board

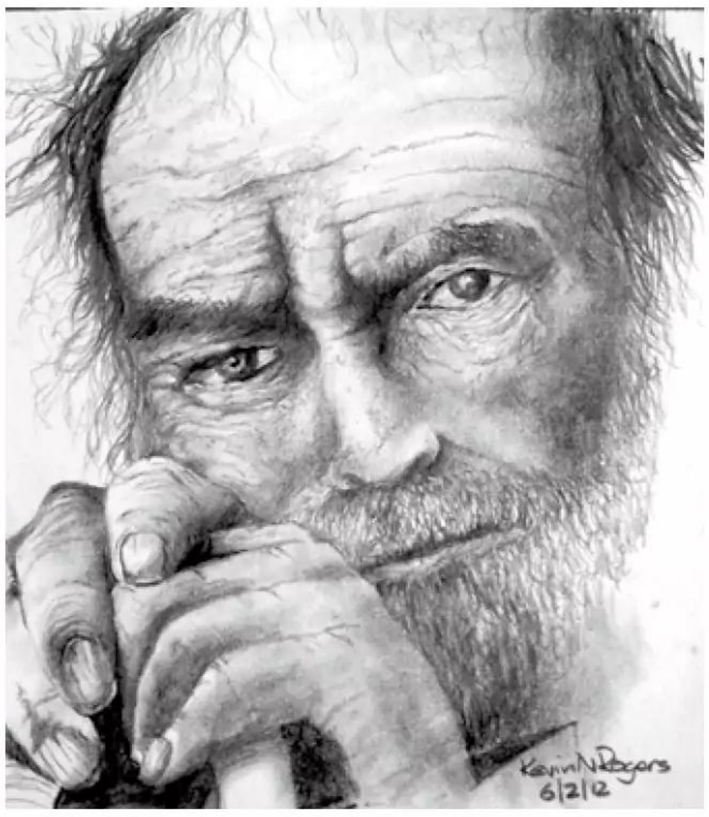
Kevin gives some wonderful tips on getting back to the basics.

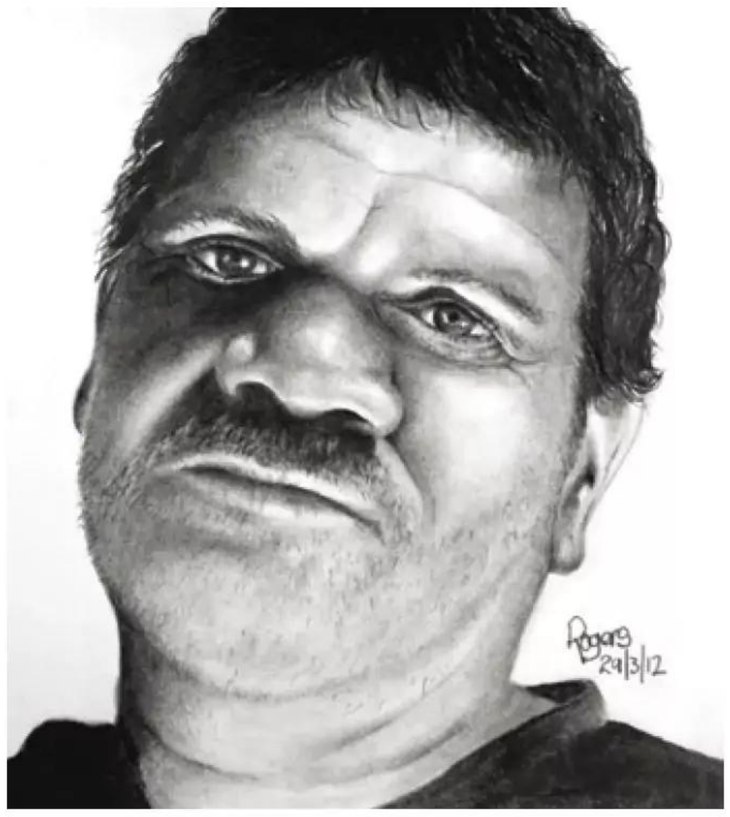


We all have fond memories of drawing on scraps of paper when we were kids. Smudging those messy oil crayons around a giant sheet of butcher's paper drawing Mum, Dad and your brothers and sisters in front of that square house with the mandatory smoke billowing chimney was where it all started. It was here and throughout school that most young artists were inspired enough to pursue art as a career. Some of us loved those art classes where others loved mathematics and chemistry. But once the call of art is heard, it is nigh impossible to deviate from that calling.

To be a good artist I believe one must be able to draw proficiently first and those skills need to be honed on a regular basis; pulling them out of the cupboard and dusting them off so to speak. I do not agree with some art instructors who say you do not need to be able to draw well to be a good artist. It would be like owning a Ferrari without having a driver's licence. I believe an artist must be able to draw perspectives and understand the basic principles of anatomy etc before painting, as I have tried to get exact perspectives with a paintbrush only and 90 per cent of the time, I have failed. I must pre-draw my paintings with a pencil first and most times I will do three or four drawings prior to painting





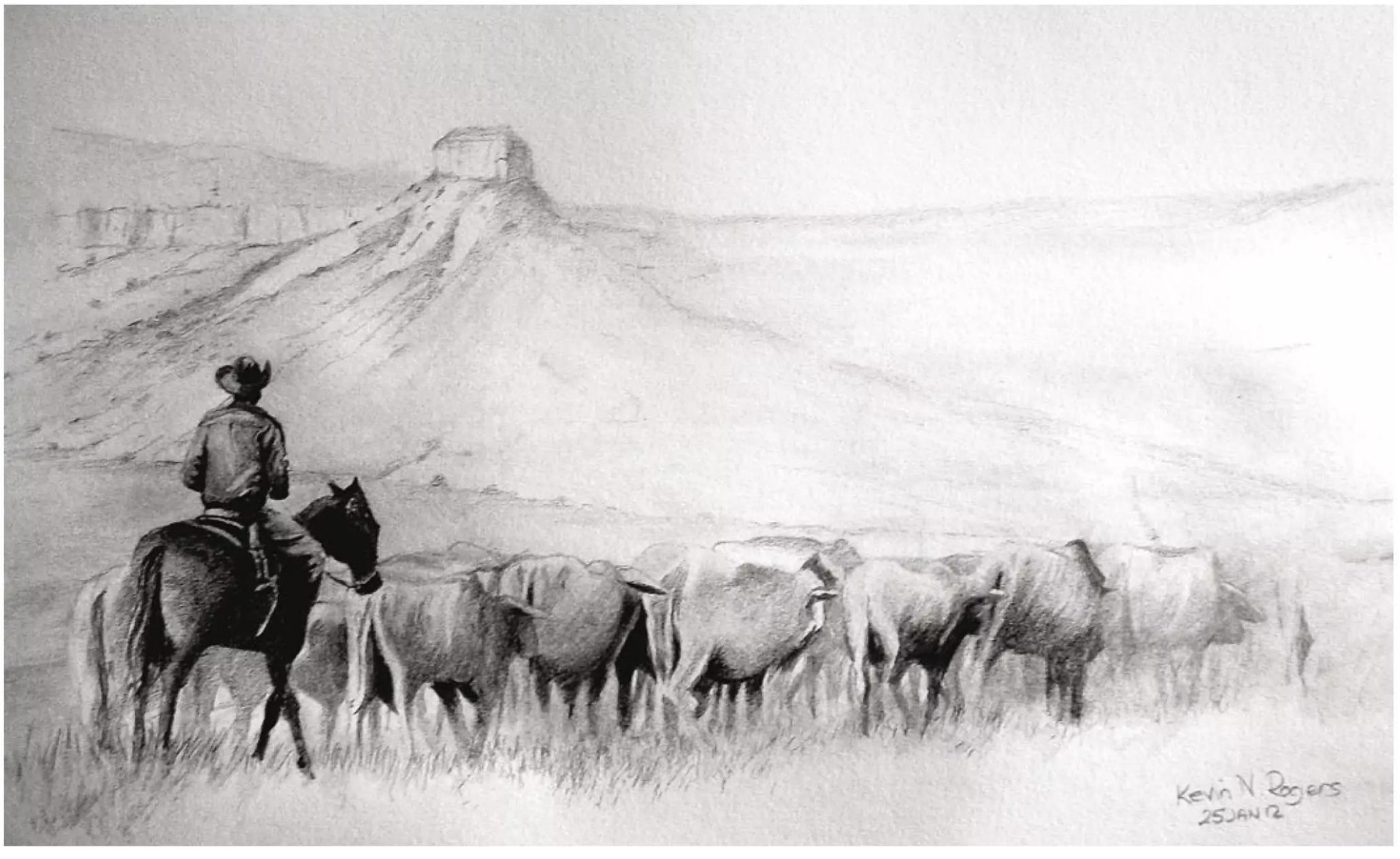


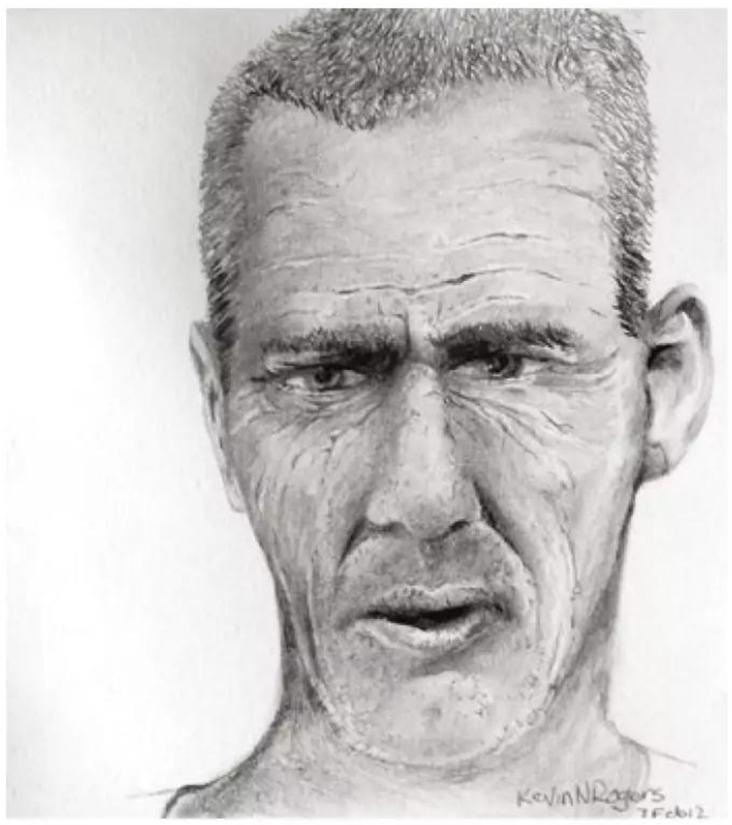
so I get my composition and tones right before touching the canvas.

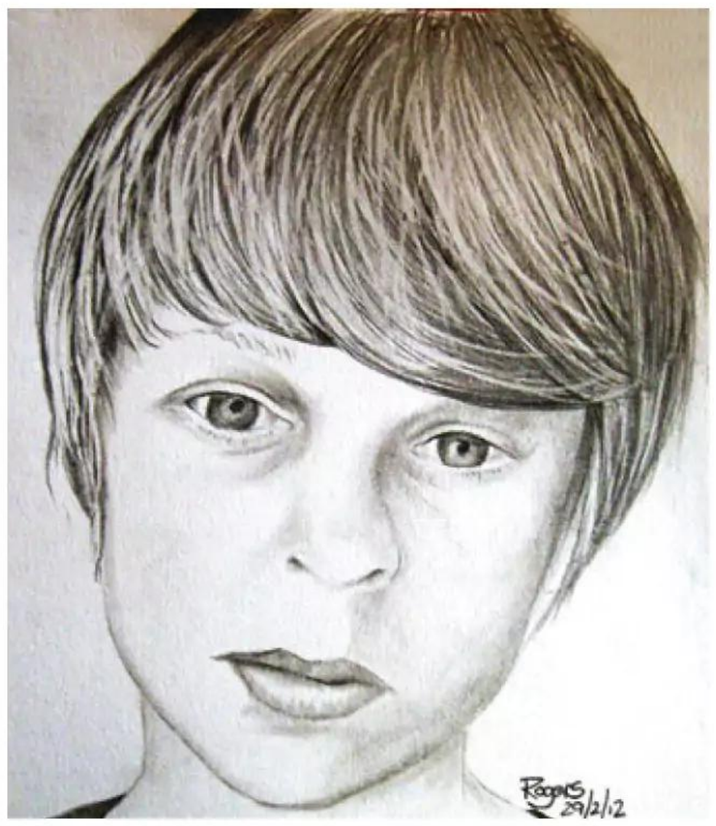
Not only do we need to re-evaluate our skillset, but we need to integrate new technologies and products into our arsenal. One such product I have found to be cutting edge for artists is the Zest-it product range. They have revolutionised drawing by inventing a liquid which when used with a Tortillon or Blending Stump has an amazing ability to blend tones perfectly. They also make products for oil painting and are working on a product to enhance acrylic paints.

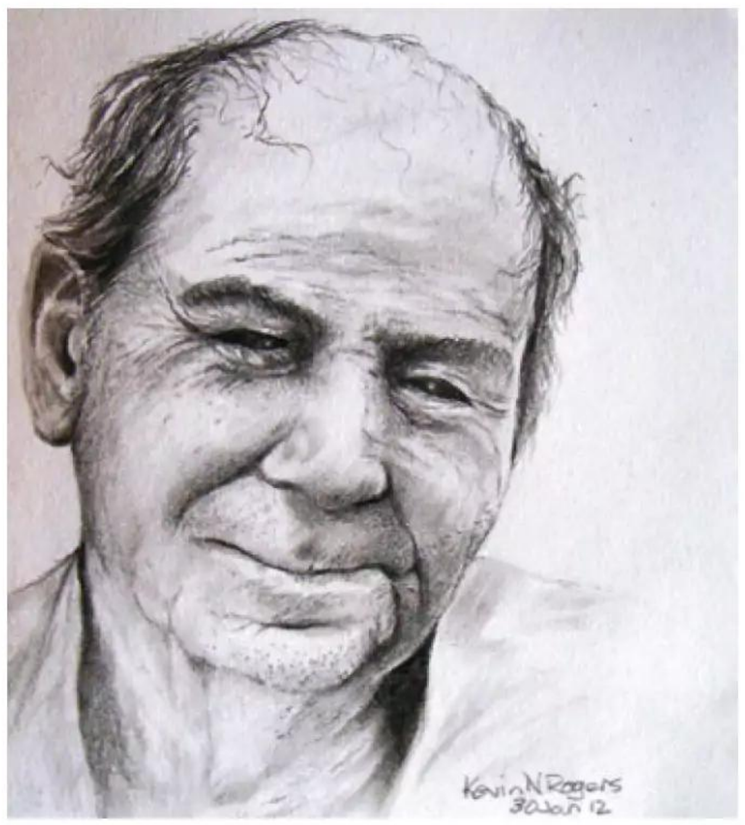
It is hard to pull yourself away from the wonderful world of colour and that feeling of laying paint down on a canvas is hard to leave and go back to a pencil and paper… but don't despair, the feeling of that pencil lightly building up a tonal base on a sheet of paper still holds an addictive charm and not only that, but the portability of the skill is also a drawcard ie, you can sit in a café, railway station, bus stop or anywhere and pull out your pencil and paper and off you go. This is how the Masters used to do it. Masters like Pablo Picasso, Monet and Van Gogh were all amazing traditional artists before they found their own styles, but all three of them were advocates for excellence in drawing.

I live in the tropics 600 kilometres south of Darwin in a little village called Daly Waters with a permanent population of five people so the only thing that changes in my life is the visitors to this tiny township. From November to April the weather is unbearable without air-conditioning.



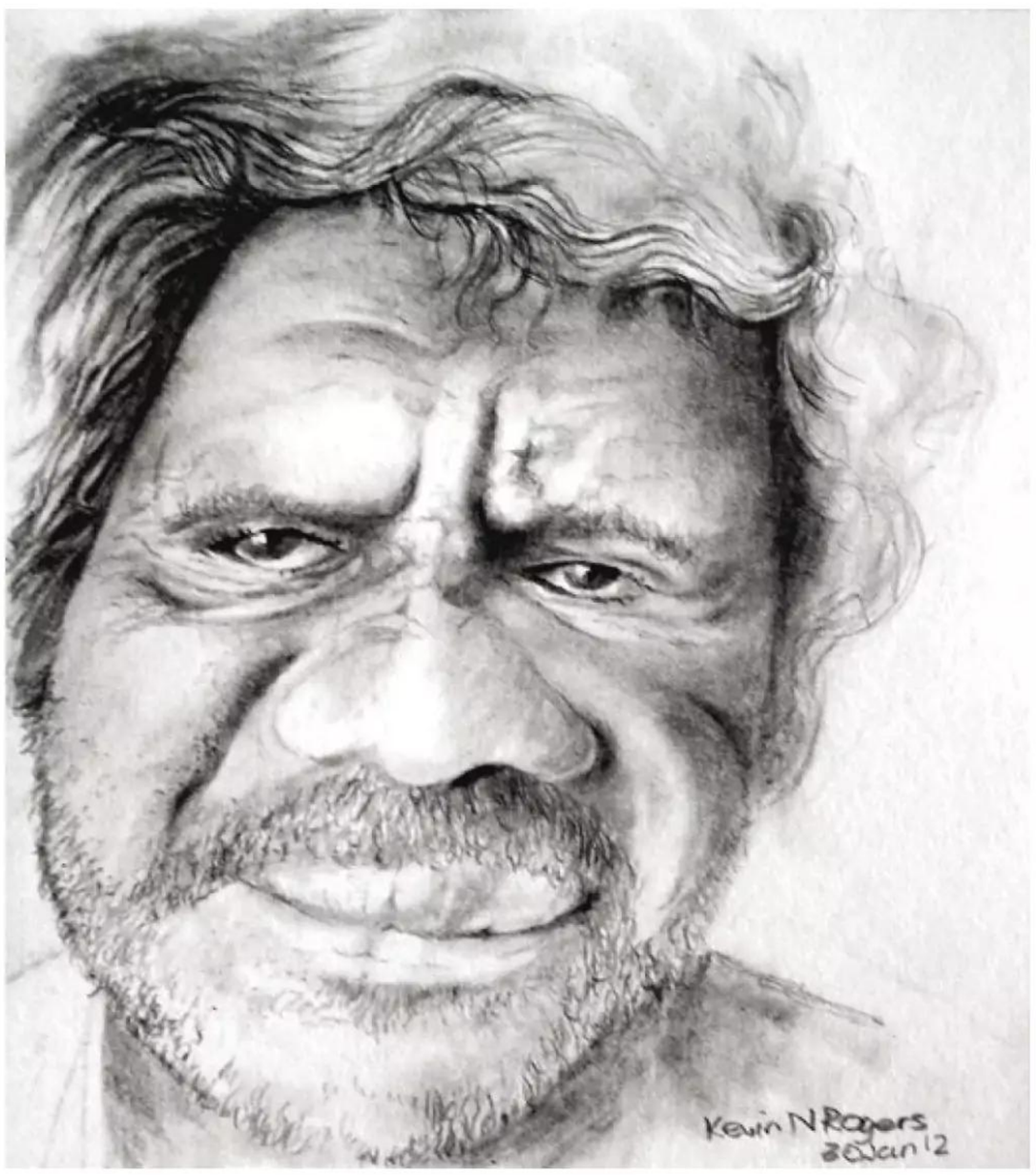


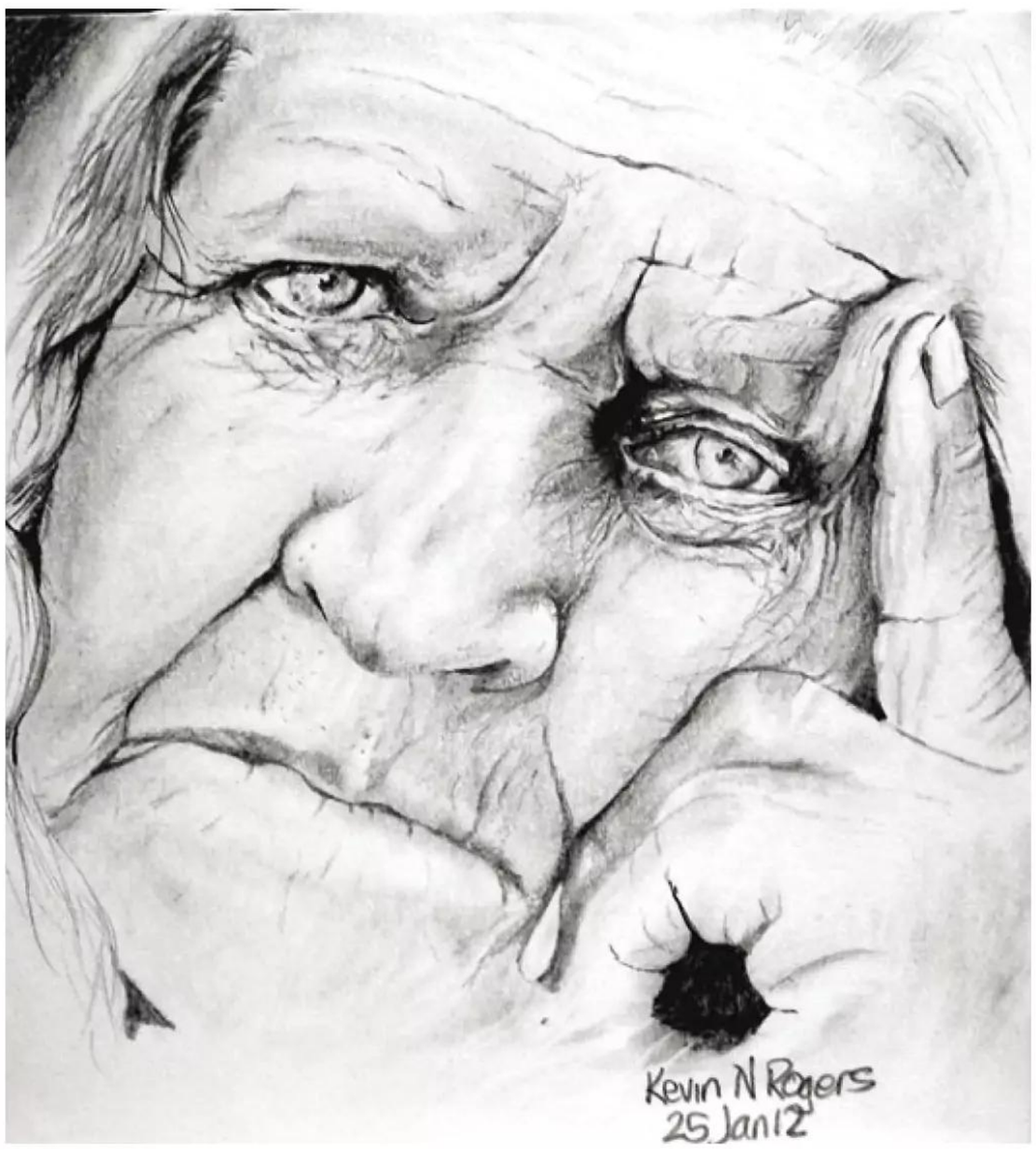




The build-up to the 'Wet' is from September to December and in the daytime temperatures reach around 45-50 degrees Celsius until the rains come. It is not uncommon to have temperatures of 54 degrees around 4pm each day during this period. So, why have I just bored you with the local weather report? Well, during this build up and through summer it is almost impossible to paint with acrylic, even Atelier Interactive paint tends to dry very quickly, not only that but where I paint is in a 20 x 10 metre studio which is almost impossible to cool down. So I retreat to the comfort of my air-conditioned home and change my artistic pursuits to watercolour painting and drawing. I have found this diversification very satisfying because by the time winter comes around I am champing at the bit to get back to acrylic painting. It is a very pleasing cycle of life.

So here I am in my nice air-conditioned room and wanting for inspiration as the Katherine Prize art competition is looming on the horizon. Artists are only allowed to put two entries into this annual prize and I only have two months to come up with a one-metre painted masterpiece (remembering I can only paint between May – August each year) for the big night in July each year. So what is my second entry going to be? … It must be a drawing but what? I started doodling and came up with the inspiration of drawing 36 pencil portraits of people in the Northern Territory to place into a frame 1m x 1m. Last year I received a highly commended and sold a painting for $1800 which inspired me to do better this year, so in order to do that I had to go 'back to the drawing board', and by doing this, it has motivated me to become a better artist.





I have found two inspirational books which are a must for any artist when it comes to back to basics stuff. They are “What Painting Is” by James Elkins and “Carlson’s Guide to Landscape Painting” by John F. Carlson. Both these books illuminated my perception of people, objects, nature and art. Little phrases like “you must paint the message you want to portray to the viewer”, and “what are you trying to tell the viewer?”. This taught me that rather than replicate an image you must tell a story first, as most art buyers want the story first and foremost … I suppose what you are doing is selling the sizzle not the sausage. I had to sit back and let this statement sink in, and eventually it did. So you see, sometimes by going back to basics you can stimulate artistic thought, because I am sure as an art student you had a couple of sick days and missed a couple of very pertinent statements like this.

So my basic drawing kit is as follows:

A pencil wrap (36 pencil capacity). These wraps have little pockets for erasers and small pencil sharpeners etc and they have a strap to keep them all in place. I keep a supply of at least four pencils of each grading.

Make sure you have a quality pencil sharpener. I recommend the A5 Helix sharpener as they have five settings and give the pencil a wonderful long lead with amazingly sharp points.

I have a small stock of kneadable erasers but I much prefer to use the Faber Castell Dust-Free eraser, so I have a stock of at least six of these. I use one for blending so it has a soft rounded corner. The second one has a sharp corner which I keep sharp by slicing a fine edge off the end of the whole eraser. This gives me the ability to remove small amounts of graphite in detail. The other four erasers can be moulded to your own taste.

Only ever buy good quality cartridge paper which is acid free and has a minimum weight of 150gsm.

Once the drawing has been completed I put it in a plastic wallet but firstly I spray it with workable fixative from Westart.

These items are just so portable so I take them everywhere in my little backpack. Because I have a pencil wrap I can be a little more robust in my handling of the pencils as I know they are protected. If you do not have access to the pencil wrap then you can use any old box or fishing tackle box so long as you wrap your pencils in bubble wrap or equivalent. I like to keep my drawing sheets separate in a clear plastic wallet which I attach to a foolscap clipboard. I just take the sheet out and put it on my clipboard which gives the paper a more solid backing than leaving the sheet in its pad.

You can make your own Tortillons at this website: http://monologues.co.uk/Portraits/Tortillon.htm
and the Zest-it range can be found at: http://www.zest-it.com/products.htm . I recommend you visit these sites if you are keen on improving your drawing skills. Furthermore there are so many drawing and painting tutorials on YouTube and many free PDF downloadable files regarding basics in art, so do your art a favour and hang up your paintbrushes for a while, make yourself a cuppa and start drawing family portraits and the world around you in pencil … you won’t regret it!

Cheers. ■

Pencils

Jane

Captured in pencil, this monotone portrait is a delight.

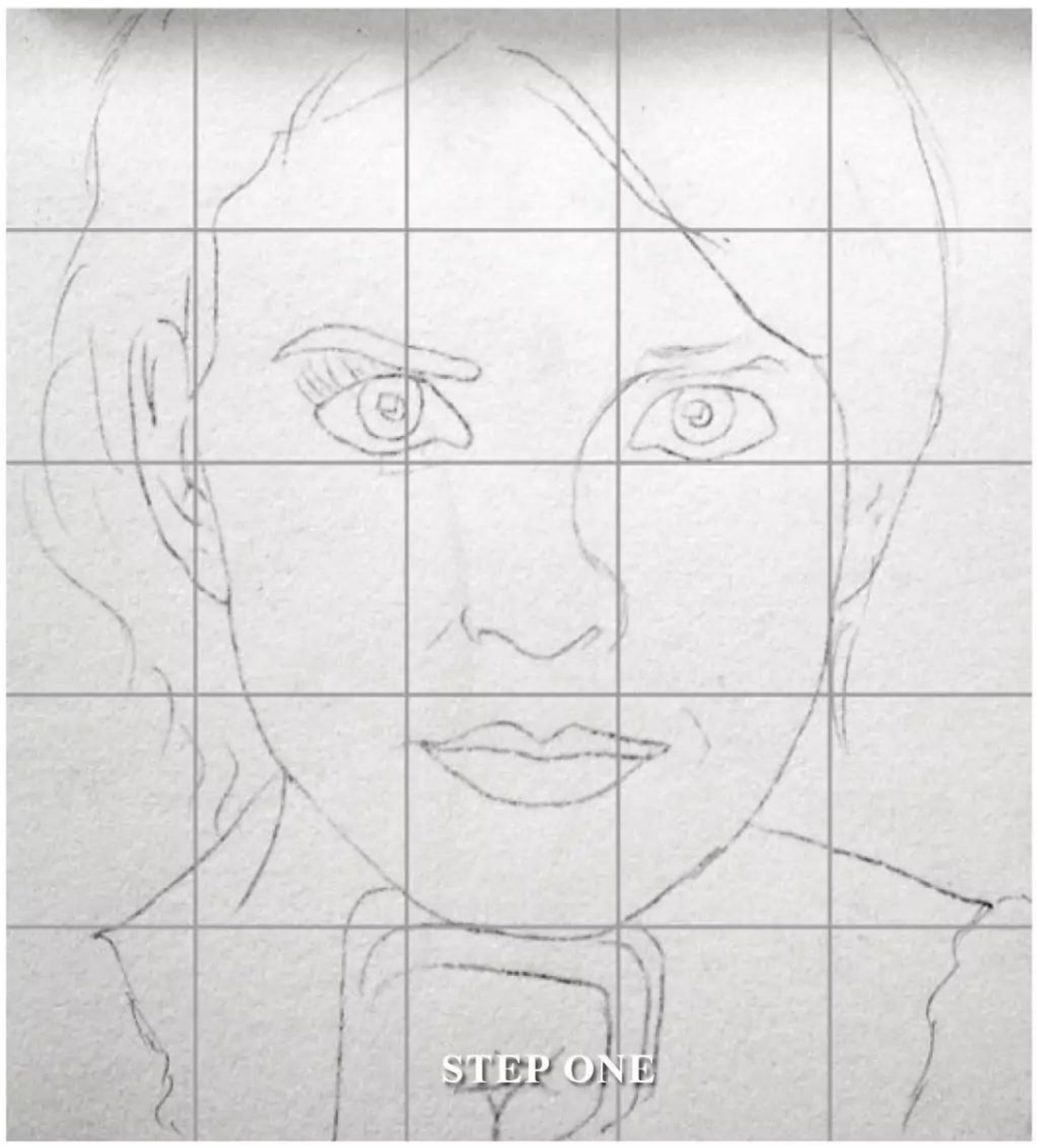
By Kevin N. Rogers

All artists need to be able to conceptualise their final work in their mind. To ensure your compositions are correct you need to be able to draw well enough to ensure your perspectives and tonal variations are true. I have hung up my brushes for the past two months and reverted to the world of

MATERIALS

- 150gsm Acid free drawing cartridge
- Pencil grades: 2B, HB, F & 2H (6B used for graphite powder supply)
- Faber Castell Dust-Free Eraser x 2 (1 for blending and 1 for
- Zest-it (Pencil Blend)
- Zest-it (Blending Sponge)
- Tortillions x 2 (1 small and 1 medium)

STEP ONE


STEP ONE

monotone; re-honing my drawing skills to speak. I have commissioned myself to draw 36 portraits in pencil before moving back to the canvas and splashing the paint around again. This should act like changing the oil in a car before driving off again.

To ensure I had quality equipment I went online and purchased a good set of Faber Castell drawing pencils (4H to 8B), an A5 Helix Pencil Sharpener which I believe is the best in the marketplace, a Faber Castell Pencil wrap which holds 36 pencils, assorted erasers and a small pencil sharpener. I bought two kneadable erasers but with the portraiture work I am doing, I find the Faber Castell Dust-Free Eraser the best one for the job (I use one for blending the graphite powder from the 6B pencil and one for actual erasure work). To get my supply of graphite powder I rub my 6B pencil on paper then lightly move my eraser back and forth across the paper to 'pick up' some graphite powder for blending.

STEP TWO

STEP THREE

STEP ONE

After choosing your photograph for the portrait, print it out and draw in the five by five square box grid over the photograph. Duplicate the grid onto your cartridge paper. Draw in the rough outline of the face to ensure the proportions are correct. Use a 2H pencil for this but not too heavy as 'H' pencils tend to leave dents in the paper when you erase the lines.

STEP TWO

Erase the grid lines with an eraser and touch up the areas where the eraser removed components of the drawing

STEP THREE

At this stage I scratch some graphite powder onto a sheet of paper by rubbing a 6B pencil across the paper slowly building up a 'pile' of graphite. When this has been done I then rub my Dust-Free eraser into and across this pile picking up graphite as I go. I then gently use my eraser as a drawing implement by placing the facial shading in place.

STEP FOUR

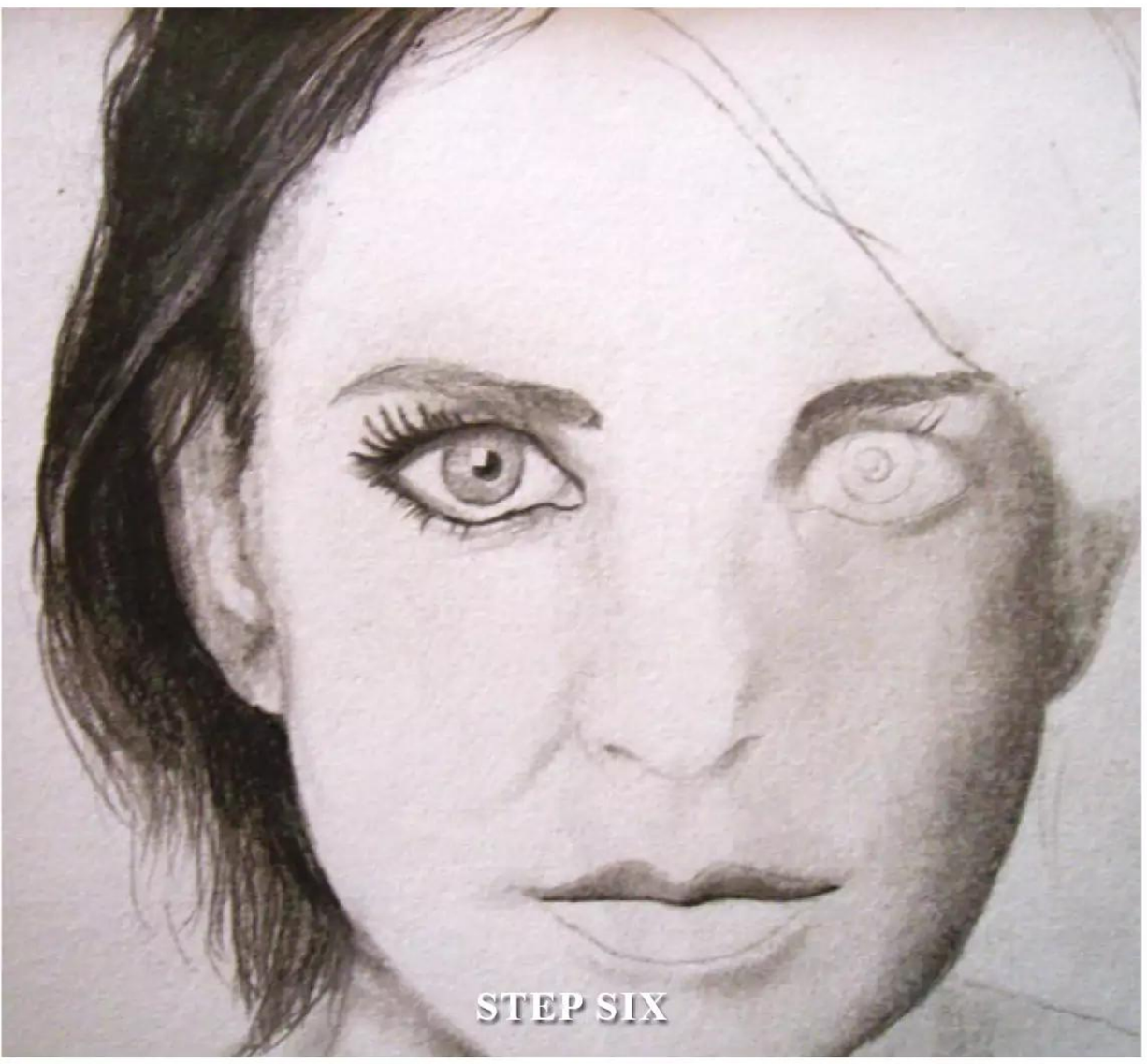
This is where my Zest-it comes into play. I ensure my Zest-it sponge is moistened (if it isn't just add 5ml to the sponge) and my Tortillons are ready. These Tortillons or Blending Stubs with Zest-it give the sketcher a powerful combination when it comes to perfect blending. So, here I dip my Tortillon into the moist Zest-it sponge and start blending the shadows put down in STEP THREE. Keep dipping and blending until you see the facial dimensions appear.

STEP FIVE

If you are right-handed, always start your drawing on the left side of the paper and vice versa for molly dookers. This will ensure you do not drag your hand across already completed pencil strokes. I always start with the hairline and work across the face from there. Hair most always has a shine in it so to make this appear, I use the clean sharp edge of an eraser and flick it through the dark pencil marks to remove the graphite, leaving

ARTIST'S HINTS AND TIPS

- Always buy quality pencils and get to know your B, F and H ratings.
- I recommend at least 6 Faber Castell Dust-Free erasers.
- Over the years I have never had an ounce of trouble with the A5 Helix Pencil Sharpener.
- Never buy paper less than 150gsm.
- Always put down a lighter grade pencil first as it is easier to darken an image than lighten it.
- Look after your pencils by packing them in either a wrap or a tackle box with bubble wrap as there is nothing worse than sharpening a pencil with broken lead segments every 3mm or so.



lighter strips on the paper. When you draw hair your pencil must be sharp so as a hint I tend to roll the tip of the pencil around which gives me a sharper point on the other side. I do this until I need to use my A5 Helix Pencil Sharpener again.

STEP SIX

Begin to detail the eyes. This will make or break your drawing so I recommend going in light and by this I use my 2H pencil and gently build up the shaded areas until I am satisfied with the way the eye looks. If you go in with a HB pencil or softer and make an error, then it is very difficult to eraser the mistake, so build up with the 2H and be patient with it. I also start drawing the lips in at this stage, remembering to work from left to right (for right-handers). At this stage I lightly draw in the right eyebrow to ensure there is a balance across the eye line.

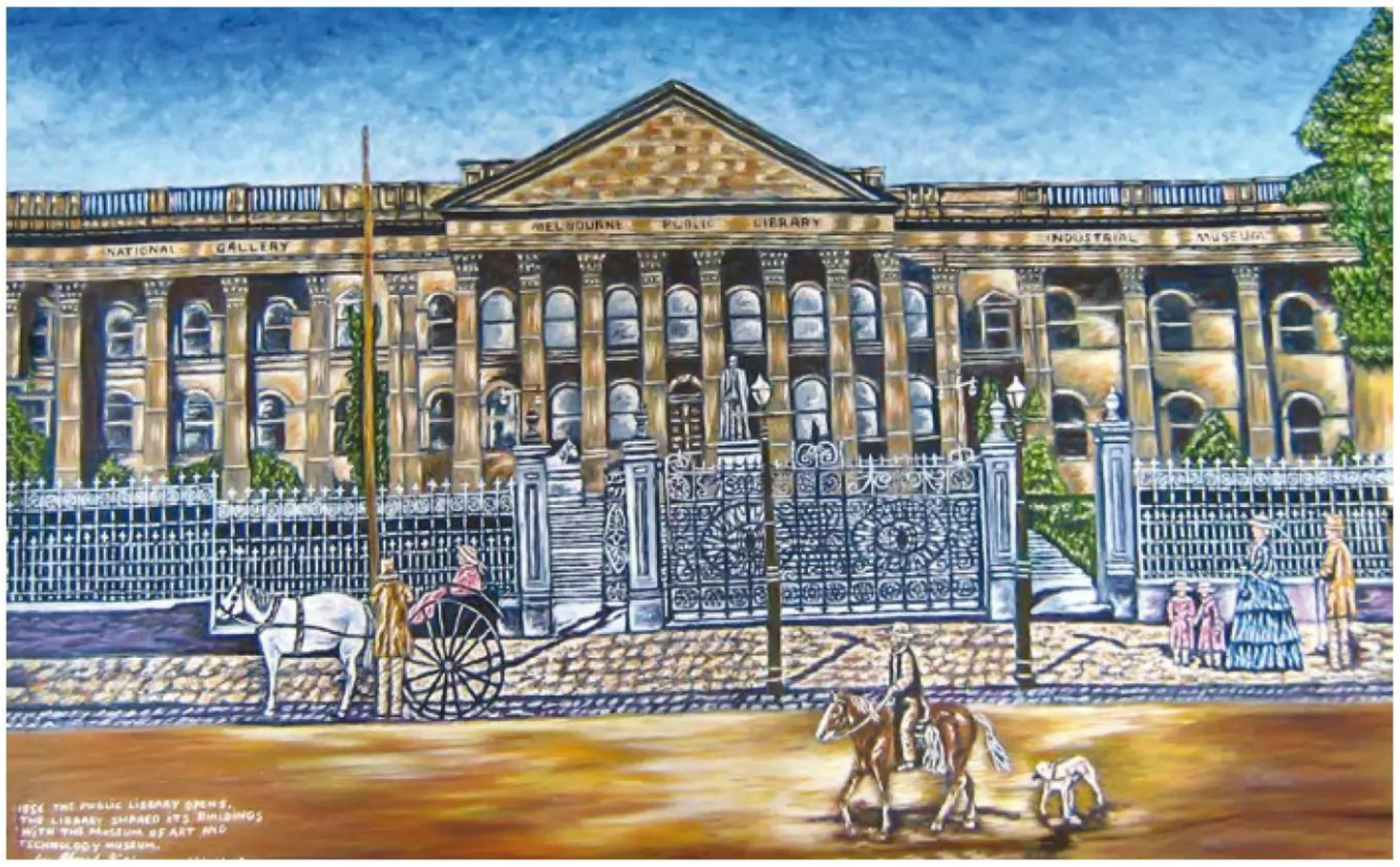
FINAL STEP

With the main facial features in place now, I stand back and to get an overall feel for the portrait. It is here I use the sharpened eraser to highlight hair and shines on the skin. I also touch up with my Tortillon and Zest-it to ensure there are no sharp delineations in the blends. The drawing is now complete. ■

Sheryl Billings

Enjoying My Art

Studying up on history, art instruction books and DVDs,
this talented artist successfully paints from a wide range of subjects,
including Ned Kelly and Sovereign Hill.

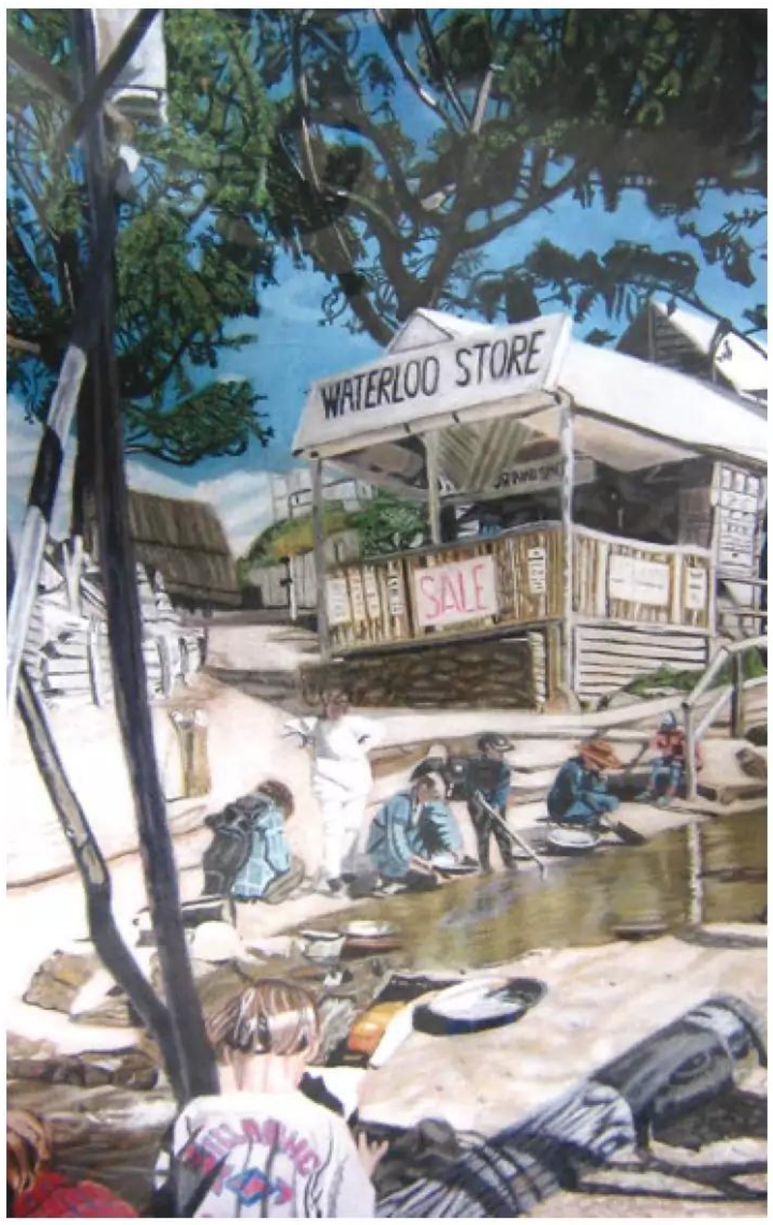


Being the last one born in a family of six siblings, I always wanted to paint people's faces but I just did not have the confidence. I was very influenced by my brother Allen, who was a very talented screen printer, and at high school I received an (A+) for graphics. I started painting for relaxation in my late twenties after a diagnosis of Repetitive Strain Injury and Carpal Tunnel surgery from typing and other repetitive jobs from my workplace.

When I first started art, I had three teachers, including Carol Boothman, who was a mentor and the president of the Waverly Art Society in Victoria. Because of the chronic pain I experience, now I am just a self-taught artist. I also have a fascination with colour and light, so I do a lot of study from art instruction books and DVDs. I did have some trouble understanding colour so I studied a book called "Colour, a Course in Mastering the Art of Mixing Colour" by Betty Edwards. I have also studied a book called "Painting Skin Tones with Colour and Light in Oil, Pastel and Watercolour" by Chris Saper. I found two DVDs very helpful as well, "Colour Mixing and Theory with Mary Gibilisco" and "Focus on Colour Therapy" from the library of Kingslan and Gibilisco. My

mediums are oil paint and pastels. I work from coloured or black and white photos or even my own sketches.

My art subjects can vary between people, animals, landscapes, beachscapes and the bushranger Ned Kelly. I also have a fascination with the goldfields township of Sovereign Hill in Ballarat, Victoria. As practice



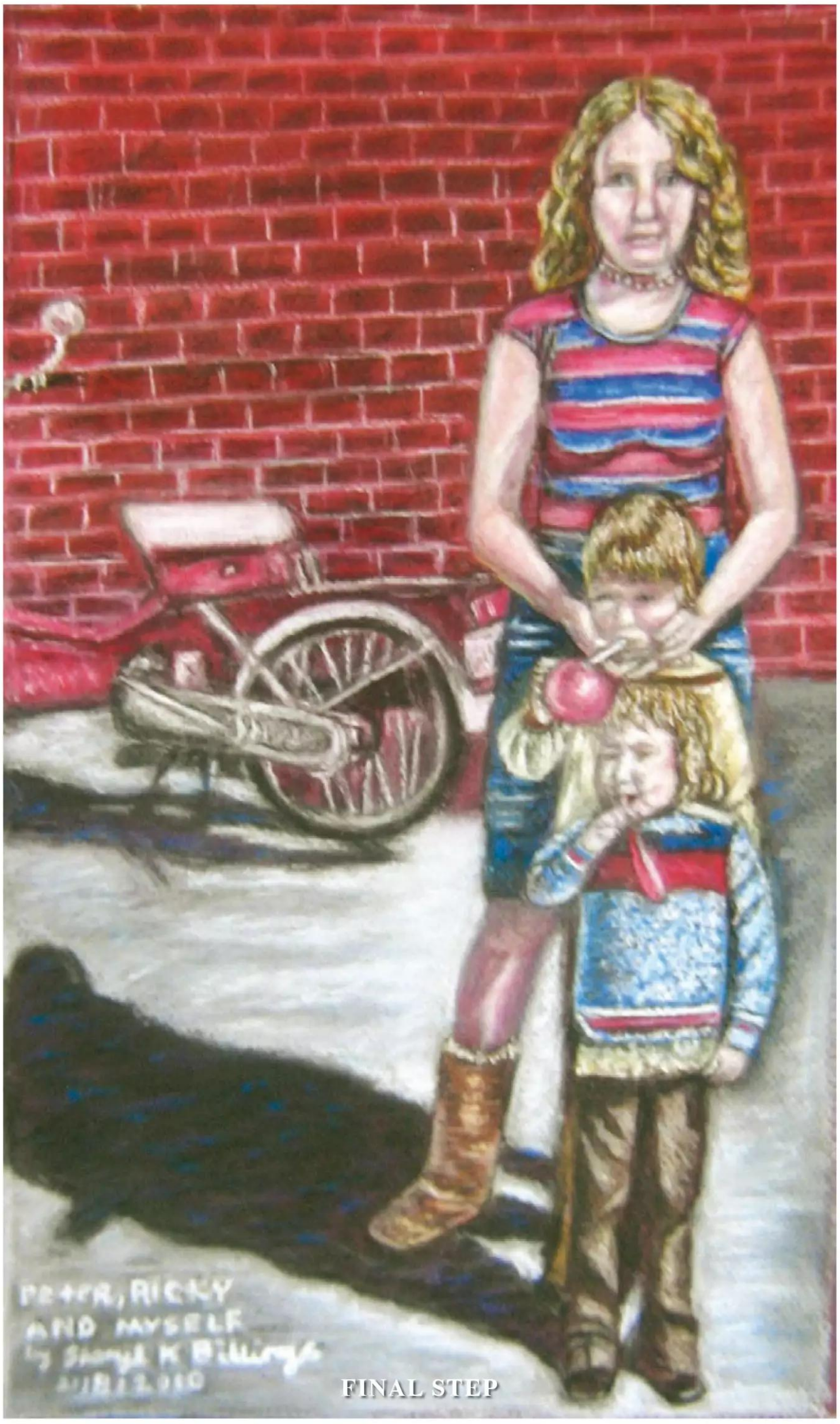
for the last 20 years I have done many Sovereign Hill pictures. One is of period costumes, using photographs by the professional photographer, Ian Roberts. So far I have done 17 oil paintings of Ned Kelly, whom I have researched from many books, and I wear 19th Century dresses, which I call 'life imitating art'. My art has been published in issue 86 of Artist's Palette magazine, where I won the Watercolour section in Lang's Gallery. My art has also been published in the Courier Ballarat newspaper in 2001 and the Riverine Herald, Echuca in 2003. In 2006 I had my first Art Exhibition at the Sherbrook Art Gallery in Belgrave, Victoria, and received coverage of it in Knox Leader newspaper in October 2006.

AWARDS

- I first started in Pastels, and won Third Prize in the Annual Spring Art Show, 1998, and Commended in 1999.
- I taught myself to use oil paint. The first oil painting which won me a prize (Highly Commended), was in 2000. I won Third Prize and Commended in the Annual Spring Art Show in 2002, Third Prize in the Stringybark Art Show in 2002, and Third Prize at the Stringybark Art Show in 2009.
- Knox Art Show
- First Prize, Pastel, 2010
- Second Prize, Pastel, 2010
- First Prize, Oil painting, 2011
- Second Prize, Oil painting, 2011
- Third Prize, Oil painting, 2012
- Second prize, Oil painting, 2012
- Lilydale Agricultural and Horticultural Society Annual Spring Show, Highly Commended, Oil painting, 2013.

Pencils and Pastels

Bringing the Past to Life



FINAL STEP

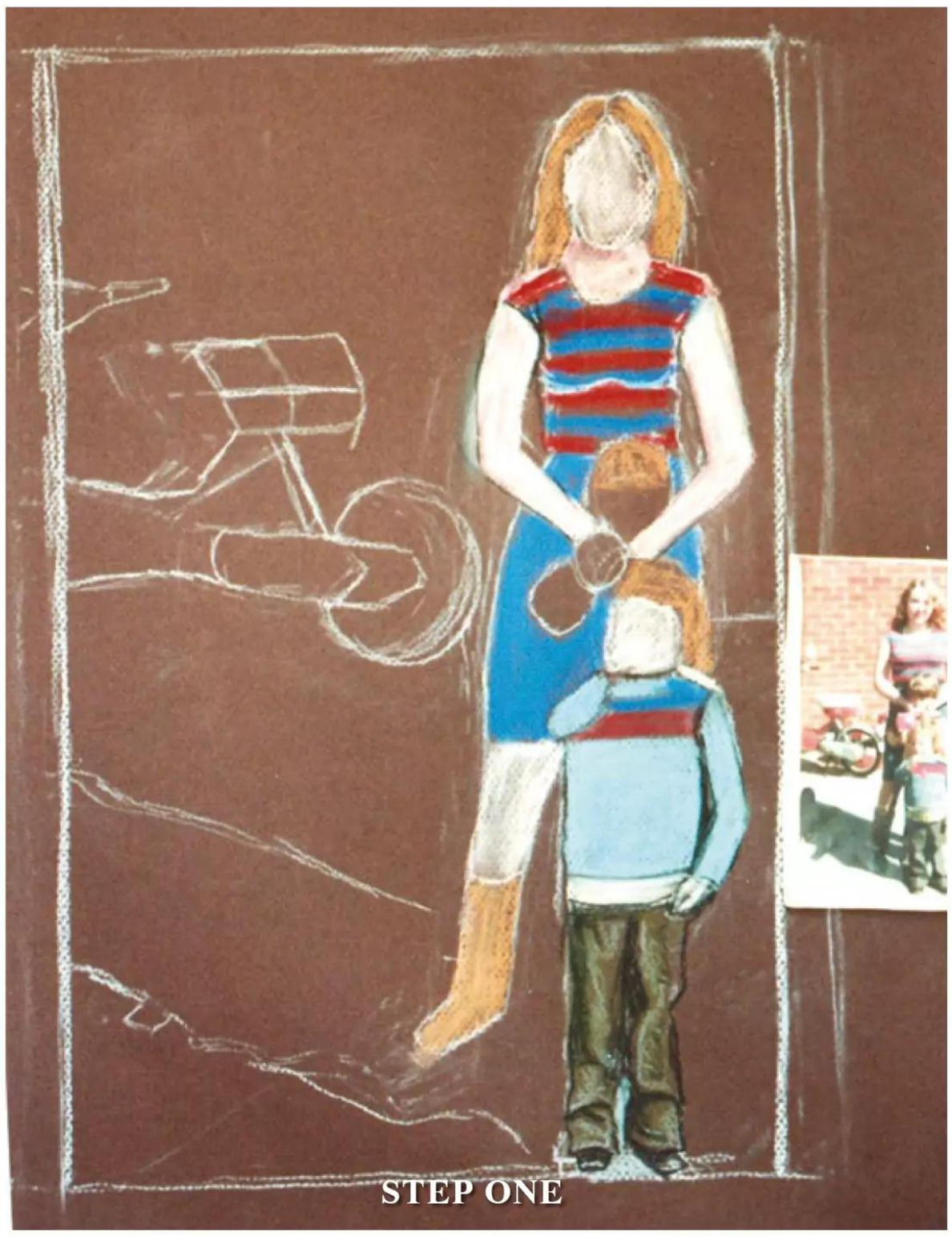
By Sheryl Billings

This clever artist discovered that bringing an old photo of herself and her nephews Ricky and Peter back to life was a very interesting experiment.

MATERIALS

- Derwent Pastel Pencils
- Prussian Blue
- Raspberry Red
- Process Yellow
- Indigo Blue
- French Grey
- Vanilla Yellow
- Spectrum Blue
- Cadmium Red
- White
- Burnt Umber
- Orange Earth
- Brown Ochre
- Yellow Ochre
- Magenta Red
- Burnt Sienna
- Umber
- Zinch Yellow
- Flesh Tone Tints Conte A Paris Pastel Pencils: Pink No 48, No 49, and No 07
- Pastel Sticks: Burnt Umber, Warm Grey, Indigo Blue
- One sheet of Canson Pastel paper
- Kneadable rubber
- Soft brush

DEMONSTRATION



STEP ONE

STEP TWO AND THREE

STEP ONE

Start drafting your shapes on Canson Pastel paper with a white Derwent Pastel pencil. I found using this old photo (of when I was only 16) a real skill to practice. The most important thing is to sketch your outline of the picture first so then you will know that the composition will always balance.

STEP TWO

I block in some of the shapes with Cadmium Red and Prussian Blue pencils. I also use a skin tone pink No 48 Conte Pastel pencil for the faces, arms and legs. For the boys' pants I use Burnt Umber, with Indigo Blue for the dark shading, and Burnt Sienna for the Ugg boots and hair. I use Spectrum Blue for the front of the boys' jumpers as well.

STEP THREE

I then proceed to the background of the picture, and start blocking in the bricks with Raspberry Red, with Indigo Blue for dark shading and White for the outline. I also use Cadmium Red and Indigo Blue for shading, White for the scooter, the seat and the inside of the wheel, and French Grey for the scooter's motor cover. I block in the

STEP FOUR

STEP FIVE

STEPS SIX AND SEVEN

ground with dark shading using Indigo Blue. Then I proceed to the middle boy's jumper with Vanilla Yellow.

ARTIST'S HINTS AND TIPS

- Always use quality pastels. I find Derwent Pastel pencils a very high quality product and they give a very soft finish and are textured.
- Fixative spray can be very helpful when you cannot layer anymore pastel on the paper. You can also use a kneadable rubber to remove any excess pastel.
- Never give up on any subject, nothing is impossible.

STEP FOUR

I start blocking in the dark shades through the picture. I use Prussian Blue and Raspberry Red for shading the skin, and only press the pastels very lightly for the skin. I use Indigo Blue for the dark shades through the rest of the picture, and use Umber for the lines through the vanilla jumper of the middle boy.

STEP FIVE

I then proceed to block in the detail of the faces and hands with Indigo Blue, and use Magenta Red for the balloons the two boys are holding. I also start putting in the eyes and mouths outline with Indigo Blue and also use this on 'my' neckline.

STEP SIX

I proceed to block in more medium colours in the faces and hands with Conte Pastel No 49 and Conte Pastel No 48, put a bit of Orange Earth and Brown Ochre through their hair and do some more detail on the face features with Indigo Blue.

STEP SEVEN

I then proceed to the light shades of the skin and clothes with White pencil. Do not press too hard; you only want a very faded shade, so then you will know that the light shades will balance.

FINAL STEP

To finish off the pastel picture, continue to add more warm highlights with White. You can also use Zinch Yellow with White, pressing only very lightly with the pencil, for a very soft tint highlight. Highlights are a very important part; this will bring the picture to life. ■

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